THE

POETICAL WORKS

OF

MARK AKENSIDE.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

WITH THE LIFE OF THE AUTHOR.

Genius of ancient Greece! whofe faithful fteps
Have led us to thefe awful folitudes
Of Nature and of Science; Nurfe rever'd
Of gen'rous counfels and heroick deeds!
O let fome portion of thy matchlefs praife
Dwell in my breaft, and teach me to adorn
This unattempted theme!---Let me
With blamelefs hand from thy unenvious fields
Tranfplant fome living bloffoms to adorn
My native clime--while to my compatriot youth
I point the great example of thy fons,
And tune to Attick themes the Britifh lyre.

PLEAS. OF IMAG. ENLARGED.

Come, AKENSIDE! come with thine Attick urn,
Fill'd from Iliffus by the Naiad's hand:
Thy harp was tun'd to Freedom---Strains like thine,
When Afia's lord bor'd the huge mountain's fide
And bridg'd the fea, to battle rous'd the tribes
Of ancient Greece.------

ANONYM.

VOL. I.

LONDON:
PRINTED BY R. HINDMARSH,
PRINTER TO HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS THE PRINCE OF WALES.
Anno 1793.

THE

POETICAL WORKS

OF

MARK AKENSIDE.

VOL. I.

CONTAINING HIS

PLEASURES OF THE IMAGINATION,

&c. &c. &c.

With what enchantment Nature's goodly ſcene
Attracts the ſenſe of mortals; how the mind
For its own eye doth objects nobler ſtill
Prepare; how men by various leſſons learn
To judge of Beauty's praiſe; what raptures fill
The breaſt with Fancy's native arts endow'd,
And what true culture guides it to renown,
My Verſe unfolds. Ye Gods or godlike Pow'rs!
Ye Guardians of the ſacred taſk! attend
Propitious! hand in hand around your Bard
Move in majeſtick meaſures.—Be great in him,
And let your favour make him wiſe to ſpeak
Of all your wond'rous empire, with a voice
So temper'd to his theme that thoſe who hear
May yield perpetual homage to yourſelves.——
O! attend, whoe'er thou art whom theſe delights can touch,
Whom Nature's aſpect, Nature's ſimple garb,
Can thus command: O! liſten to my Song,
And I will guide thee to her bliſsful walks,
And teach thy ſolitude her voice to hear,
And point her gracious features to thy view.

PLEAS. OF IMAG. ENLARGED.

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THE LIFE OF

MARK AKENSIDE.

MARK AKENSIDE, an eminent poet and physician, was born at Newcastle upon Tyne the 9th Nov. 1721. He was second son of Mark Akenside, a substantial butcher of that town: his mother's name was Mary Lumsden. At the free-school of Newcastle young Akenside received the first part of his education; he was next committed to the care of Mr. Wilson, a dissenting clergyman, who kept a private academy at Newcastle.

About the eighteenth year of his age our Author was sent to the university of Edinburgh, in the view of qualifying himself for the duties of a Presbyterian pastor, his parents and relations in general being of the Presbyterian sect. Mr. Akenside received some assistance from the funds which the English Dissenters employ in educating young men of no opulent fortunes; but his views as to the ministry altering, he bent his studies towards physick, and honestly repaid to his benefactors the money they had advanced for him, which being contributed for a different purpose than promoting the study of Physick he thought it dishonourable to retain. Whether in relinquishing his design of being a Dissenting clergyman he also ceased to be a Dissenter, is not certainly known.

Akenſide's genius and taſte for poetry diſplayed themſelves early when at Newcaſtle ſchool, and during his continuance at Mr. Wilſon's academy. His Pleaſures of Imagination, with ſeveral other poems, it is ſaid, were firſt written by him at Morpeth while upon a viſit to his relations, and before he went to the univerſity of Edinburgh, where he alſo diſtinguiſhed himſelf by his poetical compoſitions. His Ode on the Winter Solſtice, which is dated 1740, was certainly compoſed at that place.

After three years ſtudy at Edinburgh Mr. Akenſide went (1741) to Leyden, where on 16th May 1744 he took his degree of Doctor in Phyſick. Same year appeared his Pleaſures of Imagination, a poem which procured him ſome emolument and much reputation. This poem was followed by An Epiſtle to Curio, an acrimonious attack on the political conduct of William Pulteney, Earl of Bath, whom he ſtigmatizes under the name of Curio as the betrayer of his country, alſo publiſhed in 1744. Akenſide diſſatisfied with this performance, altered it exceedingly: he converted the Epiſtle into an Ode, and reduced it to leſs than half the number of lines of which it originally conſiſted. In 1745 he publiſhed his firſt Collection of Odes, ten in number. In 1748 came out his Ode to the Earl of Huntingdon; and in 1758 he attempted to rouſe the national ſpirit by An Ode to the Country Gentlemen of England. Few of his re-

maining poems were published separately, excepting the Ode to Thomas Edwards, Esq. which though written in 1751 was not printed till the year 1766. The rest of Dr. Akenside's poems which appeared in his life-time were given, at least for the most part, in the sixth volume of Dodsley's Collection.

Soon after his return from Leyden he commenced physician at Northampton, where Dr. Stonehouse then practised with reputation and success. Whilst here he carried on an amicable debate with Dr. Doddridge concerning the opinions of the ancient philosophers with regard to a future state of rewards and punishments, in which Dr. Akenside supported the firm belief of Cicero in particular in this great article of natural religion. Not meeting with sufficient encouragement at Northampton, or being ambitious of a larger field in which to display his talents, he removed to Hampstead, where he resided upwards of two years, and then finally fixed himself in London.

At London he was well known as a poet, but had still to force his way as a physician. At first he had but little practice, and would probably have been reduced to difficulties had not Mr. Dyson, his intimate friend, generously allowed him 300*l*. a year, which enabled him to make a proper appearance in the world. In time the Doctor acquired considerable reputation and practice, and arrived at most of the honours incident to his profession: he became a Fellow of the Royal

Society, a Phyſician to St. Thomas's Hoſpital, was admitted by mandamus to the degree of Doctor in Phyſick in the univerſity of Cambridge, and elected a Fellow of the Royal College of Phyſicians in London, and upon the ſettlement of the Queen's houſehold was appointed one of the Phyſicians to her Majeſty. He perhaps might have ſtill roſe to a greater elevation of character, had not his ſtudies ended with his life by a putrid fever 23d June 1770, in the 49th year of his age. He was buried in the pariſh of St. James's, Weſtminſter.

Dr. Akenſide was much devoted to the ſtudy of ancient literature, and was a great admirer of Plato, Cicero, and the beſt philoſophers of antiquity. His knowledge and taſte in this reſpect are conſpicuous in his poems, and in the Notes and Illuſtrations which he hath annexed to them. That he had a ſincere reverence for the great and fundamental principles of religion, is apparent from numberleſs paſſages in his writings. His high veneration for the Supreme Being, his noble ſentiments of the wiſdom and benevolence of the Divine Providence, and his zeal for the cauſe of virtue, are conſpicuous in all his poems. His regard to the Chriſtian revelation, and his ſolicitude to have it preſerved in its native purity, are diſplayed in the Ode to the Biſhop of Wincheſter. His attachment to the cauſe of civil and religious liberty is a diſtinguiſhed feature in the character of his poetical writ-

ings: he embraces every occasion of displaying his ardour concerning this subject; and two of his Odes, those to the Earl of Huntingdon and the Bishop of Winchester, are directly consecrated to it.

Dr. Akenside is to be considered as a didactick and lyrick poet. His chief work, The Pleasures of Imagination, was received with great applause, and raised the Author's reputation high in the poetical world. Pope, on looking into the manuscript before publication, is reported to have said "That the Author was "no every-day writer." Mr. Cooper, in his Letters concerning Taste, speaks of Akenside in the following strain of commendation: "For my part I am of "opinion that there is now living a poet of as genuine a genius as this kingdom ever produced, Shake-"speare alone excepted. By poetical genius I do not "mean the mere talent of making verses, but that "glorious enthusiasm of soul, that fine phrensy, in "which the poet's *eye rowling glances from heaven to* "*earth, from earth to heaven*, as Shakespeare feelingly "describes it. This alone is poetry; aught else is a "mechanical art of putting syllables harmoniously to-"gether. The gentleman I mean is Dr. Akenside, the "worthy Author of The Pleasures of Imagination, "the most beautiful didactick poem that ever adorned "the English language." On the other hand the late Mr. Gray, in a letter to Mr. Wharton of Old Park near Durham, dated Peterhouse, 26th April 1744,

(Mason's 4to edit. of Gray, p. 178.) says, "You de-
"sire to know, it seems, what character the poem of
"your young friend (Dr. Akenside) bears here. I
"wonder that you ask the opinion of a nation where
"those who pretend to judge do not judge at all, and
"the rest (the wiser part) wait to catch the judg-
"ment of the world immediately above them, that is,
"Dick's and the Rainbow coffee-houses. Your readier
"way would be to ask the ladies who keep the bars
"in those two theatres of criticism. However, to shew
"you that I am a judge as well as my countrymen,
"I will tell you, though I have rather turned it over
"than read it, (Pleasures of Imagination) but no mat-
"ter, no more have they, that it seems to me above
"the middling, and now and then, for a little while,
"rises even to the best, particularly in description.
"It is often obscure, and even unintelligible, and
"too much infected with the Hutchinson jargon. In
"short, its great fault is that it was published at least
"nine years too early. And so methinks, in a few
"words, *a la mode du Temple*, I have very prettily dis-
"patched what perhaps may for several years have
"employed a very ingenious man worth fifty of my-
"self."

"As these observations were hastily delivered in a
"private letter, before the poem had been maturely
"examined, we may be allowed (say the writers of
"The Biographia) to think them too severe, and to

" steer a middle course between Mr. Gray and Mr.
" Cooper. The obscurity of The Pleasures of Imagi-
" nation, when read with attention, will chiefly be
" found in the allegory of the second book, which we
" freely confess we could never understand. It might
" likewise have been better if the peculiar language
" of Hutchinson, or rather of Shaftesbury, had some-
" times been omitted. Nevertheless we cannot but
" regard it as a noble and beautiful poem, exhibiting
" many bright displays of genius and fancy, and hold-
" ing out sublime views of Nature, Providence, and
" morality. We concur with Mr. Gray in thinking
" it was published too early: the Author himself be-
" came afterwards of the same sentiment: he was con-
" vinced that the poem was defective in some re-
" spects, and redundant in others." "That it want-
" ed revision and correction," says Mr. Dyson, his
editor, "he was sufficiently sensible; but so quick was
" the demand for several successive republications,
" that in any of the intervals to have completed the
" whole of his corrections was utterly impossible; and
" yet to have gone on from time to time in making
" farther improvements in every new edition would,
" he thought, have had the appearance at least of abu-
" sing the favour of the publick: he chose therefore
" to continue for some time reprinting it without al-
" teration, and to forbear publishing any corrections
" or improvements until he should be able at once to

"give them to the publick complete: and with this "view he went on for several years to review and "correct his poem at leisure, till at length he found "the task grow so much upon his hands, that despair-"ing of ever being able to execute it sufficiently to his "own satisfaction, he abandoned the purpose of cor-"recting, and resolved to write the poem over anew, "upon a somewhat different and an enlarged plan."

Dr. Akenside did not live to finish the whole of his plan: that part of it which is carried into execution occurs next in this edition, and the reader may judge of the Doctor's intentions by having recourse to the General Argument prefixed to the poem. He designed at first to comprise the whole of his subject, according to a new plan, in four books; but he afterwards changed his purpose, and determined to distribute The Pleasures of Imagination into a greater number of books. How far his scheme would have carried him, if he had lived to complete it, is uncertain, for at his death he had only finished the first and second books, a considerable part of the third, and the introduction to the fourth. The first book of the improved work bears a nearer resemblance to the first book of the former editions than any of the rest do to each other: there are nevertheless in this book a great number of corrections and alterations, and several considerable additions. Dr. Akenside has introduced a tribute of respect and affection to his friend Mr. Dyson: he has referred

The Pleaſures of Imagination to two ſources only, Greatneſs and Beauty, and not to three, as he had heretofore done: his delineation of beautiful objects is much enlarged; and, upon the whole, the firſt book ſeems to have received no ſmall degree of improvement. The ſecond book is very different from the ſecond book of the preceding editions: the difference indeed is ſo great that they cannot be compared together. The Author enters into a diſplay of Truth and its three claſſes, matter of Fact, experimental or ſcientifical Truth, and univerſal Truth. He treats likewiſe of Virtue, as exiſting in the Divine Mind, of human virtue, of Vice and its origin, of Ridicule, and of the Paſſions. What he hath ſaid upon the ſubject of ridicule is greatly and advantageouſly reduced from what it was in the former copies. The enumeration of the different ſources of ridicule is left out, and conſequently ſome lines which had given offence to Dr. Warburton. The allegorical Viſion which heretofore conſtituted a principal part of the ſecond book is likewiſe omitted. The poetical character of the ſecond book, as it now ſtands, is, that it is correct, moral, and noble. The third book is an epiſode, in which Solon the Athenian lawgiver is the chief character; and the deſign of it ſeems to be, to ſhew the great influence of poetry in enforcing the cauſe of Liberty. This part is entirely new, and if it had been finiſhed would have proved a beautiful addition to the poem. It is greatly to be re-

gretted that Dr. Akenſide did not live to complete his deſign; nevertheleſs we ſhould have been ſorry to have had the original poem entirely ſuperſeded. Whatever may be its faults, there is in it a certain brightneſs and brilliancy of Imagination, and a certain degree of enthuſiaſm, which the Doctor did not ſeem to have poſſeſſed in equal vigour in the latter part of his life. Years, and an application to ſcientifick ſtudies, appear in ſome meaſure to have turned his mind from ſound to things, from fancy to the underſtanding.

Dr. Johnſon, in his life of Akenſide, ſays of this poem, "It has undoubtedly a juſt claim to very particular notice, as an example of great felicity of genius, and uncommon amplitude of acquiſitions, of a young mind ſtored with images, and much exerciſed in combining and comparing them." Of the altered work he adds, "He ſeems to have ſomewhat contracted his diffuſion; but I know not whether he has gained in cloſeneſs what he has loſt in ſplendour."

"To The Pleaſures of Imagination," continue the authors of The Biographia, "ſucceed two books of Odes, the firſt containing eighteen, the ſecond fifteen odes. It was Dr. Akenſide's intention, if he had lived, to have made each book conſiſt of twenty odes. Thoſe which had been formerly publiſhed are greatly altered and improved. The Doctor's odes are not equal to the beautiful productions of

"Mr. Gray, nor perhaps to those of one or two living "writers; but still there is in them a noble vein of "poetry, united with manly sense, and applied to excellent purposes. This encomium cannot be extended to the whole of the odes without exception: Dr. "Akenside does not always preserve the dignity of "the lyrick Muse: he is defective in the pathetick "even upon a subject which peculiarly required it, "and where it might have been most expected, the "death of his mistress, we mean his Ode to the Evening Star. However, his Hymn to Cheerfulness, and "his Odes on leaving Holland, on Lyrick Poetry, to "the Earl of Huntingdon, and on Recovering from a "fit of Sickness, justly entitle him to a place among "the principal Lyrick writers of this country."

"Of his Odes," says Dr. Johnson, "nothing favourable can be said.—To examine such compositions singly cannot be required; they have doubtless brighter and darker parts: but when they are "once found to be generally dull, all further labour "may be spared: for to what use can the work be "criticised that will not be read?" In this diversity of opinions the reader will determine for himself.

Dr. Akenside's principal medical performance was, 1. His Dissertatio de Dysenteria, published in 1764, which has been commended as an elegant specimen of Latinity: it was twice translated into English. He also wrote, 2. Observations on the Origin and Use of

the Lymphatick Veſſels in Animals. 3. An Account of a Blow on the Heart, and its Effects. 4. Oratio Anniverſaria, ex Inſtituto Harveii, in Theatro Collegii Regalis Medicorum Londinenſis habita, Anno 1759. 5. Obſervations on Cancers. 6. Of the Uſe of Ipecacuanha in Aſthmas. 7. A Method of treating White Swellings of the Joints. Beſides theſe he read at the College ſome Practical Obſervations made at St. Thomas's Hoſpital on the putrid Eryſipelas, which he intended for the ſecond volume of The Medical Tranſactions. This paper he carried home with a deſign to correct it, but it was not returned at the time of his death. Being appointed Cronian Lecturer, he choſe for his ſubject "The Hiſtory of the Revival of Learning," and read three lectures on it before the College, but from which he ſoon deſiſted, it was ſuppoſed in diſguſt, ſome one of the College having objected that he had choſen a ſubject foreign to the inſtitution. Moſt of the above pieces were publiſhed in The Philoſophical and Medical Tranſactions.

ADVERTISEMENT

TO THE EDITION 1772.

THIS volume contains a complete collection of the poems of the late Dr. Akenſide, either reprinted from the original editions, or faithfully publiſhed from copies which had been prepared by himſelf for publication.

That the principal poem ſhould appear in ſo diſadvantageous a ſtate, may require ſome explanation. The firſt publication of it was at a very early part of the Author's life; that it wanted reviſion and correction he was ſufficiently ſenſible; but ſo quick was the demand for ſeveral ſucceſſive republications, that in any of the intervals to have completed the whole of his corrections was utterly impoſſible: and yet to have gone on from time to time in making farther improvements in every new edition would, he thought, have had the appearance at leaſt of abuſing the favour of the publick: he choſe therefore to continue for ſome time reprinting it without alteration, and to forbear publiſhing any corrections or improvements until he ſhould be able at once to give them to the publick complete: and with this view he went on for ſeveral years to review and correct his poem at leiſure, till at length he found the taſk grow ſo much upon his hands, that deſpairing of ever being able to execute it ſufficiently to his own ſatisfaction, he abandoned the

purpose of correcting, and resolved to write the poem over anew upon a somewhat different and an enlarged plan: and in the execution of this design he had made a considerable progress. What reason there may be to regret that he did not live to execute the whole of it, will best appear from the perusal of the plan itself, as stated in the General Argument, and of the parts which he had executed, and which are here published: for the person * to whom he intruste the disposal of his papers would have thought himself wanting as well to the service of the publick as to the fame of his friend, if he had not produced as much of the work as appeared to have been prepared for publication. In this light he considered the entire first and second books, of which a few copies had been printed for the use only of the Author and certain friends; also a very considerable part of the third book, which had been transcribed in order to its being printed in the same manner; and to these is added the introduction to a subsequent book, which in the manuscripts is called the fourth, and which appears to have been composed at the time when the Author intended to comprise the whole in four books; but which, as he had afterwards determined to distribute the poem into more books, might perhaps more properly be called the last book. And this is all that is executed of

* The Right Hon. Jeremiah Dyson, by whom this Advertisement was written.

the new work, which although it appeared to the editor too valuable, even in its imperfect ſtate, to be withholden from the publick, yet (he conceives) takes in by much too ſmall a part of the original poem to ſupply its place, and to ſuperſede the republication of it; for which reaſon both the poems are inſerted in this Collection.

Of Odes the Author had deſigned to make up two books, conſiſting of twenty odes each, including the ſeveral odes which he had before publiſhed at different times.

The Hymn to the Naiads is reprinted from the ſixth volume of Dodſley's Miſcellanies, with a few corrections, and the addition of ſome Notes. To the Inſcriptions, taken from the ſame volume, three new Inſcriptions are added, the laſt of which is the only inſtance wherein a liberty has been taken of inſerting any thing in this Collection which did not appear to have been intended by the Author for publication, * among whoſe papers no copy of this was found, but it is printed from a copy which he had many years ſince given to the editor.

* In the preſent edition a few pieces are added which are known to be genuine, and which certainly are no diſcredit to their Author.

THE DESIGN.

There are certain powers in human nature which ſeem to hold a middle place between the organs of bodily ſenſe and the faculties of moral perception: they have been called by a very general name "The Powers "of Imagination." Like the external ſenſes they relate to matter and motion, and at the ſame time give the mind ideas analogous to thoſe of moral approbation and diſlike. As they are the inlets of ſome of the moſt exquiſite Pleaſures with which we are acquainted, it has naturally happened that men of warm and ſenſible tempers have ſought means to recal the delightful perceptions which they afford, independent of the objects which originally produced them. This gave riſe to the imitative or deſigning arts, ſome of which, as painting and ſculpture, directly copy the external appearances which were admired in nature; others, as muſick and poetry, bring them back to remembrance by ſigns univerſally eſtabliſhed and underſtood.

But theſe arts, as they grew more correct and deliberate, were of courſe led to extend their imitation beyond the peculiar objects of the imaginative powers, eſpecially poetry, which making uſe of language as the inſtrument by which it imitates, is conſequently become an unlimited repreſentative of every ſpecies and mode of being; yet as their intention was only to expreſs the objects of Imagination, and as they ſtill abound chiefly in ideas of that claſs, they of courſe retain their original character, and all the different

Pleasures which they excite are termed in general Pleasures of Imagination.

The Design of the following Poem is to give a view of these in the largest acceptation of the term, so that whatever our Imagination feels from the agreeable appearances of nature, and all the various entertainment we meet with either in poetry, painting, musick, or any of the elegant arts, might be deducible from one or other of those principles in the constitution of the human mind which are here established and explained.

In executing this general plan it was necessary first of all to distinguish the Imagination from our other faculties, and in the next place to characterize those original forms or properties of being about which it is conversant, and which are by nature adapted to it, as light is to the eyes, or truth to the understanding. These properties Mr. Addison had reduced to the three general classes of Greatness, Novelty, and Beauty; and into these we may analyze every object, however complex, which, properly speaking, is delightful to the Imagination. But such an object may also include many other sources of Pleasure, and its beauty, or novelty, or grandeur, will make a stronger impression by reason of this concurrence. Besides which the imitative arts, especially poetry, owe much of their effect to a similar exhibition of properties quite foreign to the Imagination, insomuch that in every line of the most applauded poems we meet with either ideas drawn from the external senses, or truths discovered

to the underſtanding, or illuſtrations of contrivance and final cauſes, or, above all the reſt, with circumſtances proper to awaken and engage the paſſions; it was therefore neceſſary to enumerate and exemplify theſe different ſpecies of Pleaſure, eſpecially that from the paſſions, which as it is ſupreme in the nobleſt work of human genius, ſo being in ſome particulars not a little ſurpriſing, gave an opportunity to enliven the didactick turn of the poem by introducing an allegory to account for the appearance.

After theſe parts of the ſubject which hold chiefly of admiration, or naturally warm and intereſt the mind, a Pleaſure of a very different nature, that which ariſes from Ridicule, came next to be conſidered. As this is the foundation of the comick manner in all the arts, and has been but very imperfectly treated by moral writers, it was thought proper to give it a particular illuſtration, and to diſtinguiſh the general ſources from which the ridicule of characters is derived. Here too a change of ſtyle became neceſſary, ſuch an one as might yet be conſiſtent, if poſſible, with the general taſte of compoſition in the ſerious parts of the ſubject; nor is it an eaſy taſk to give any tolerable force to images of this kind without running either into the gigantick expreſſions of the mock heroick, or the familiar and poetical raillery of profeſſed ſatire, neither of which would have been proper here.

The materials of all imitation being thus laid open, nothing now remained but to illuſtrate ſome partic-

cular Pleaſures which ariſe either from the relations of different objects one to another, or from the nature of imitation itſelf. Of the firſt kind is that various and complicated reſemblance exiſting between ſeveral parts of the material and immaterial worlds, which is the foundation of metaphor and wit. As it ſeems in a great meaſure to depend on the early aſſociation of our ideas, and as this habit of aſſociating is the ſource of many Pleaſures and pains in life, and on that account bears a great ſhare in the influence of poetry and the other arts, it is therefore mentioned here, and its effects deſcribed: then follows a general account of the production of theſe elegant arts, and of the ſecondary Pleaſure, as it is called, ariſing from the reſemblance of their imitations to the original appearances of nature: after which the work concludes with ſome reflections on the general conduct of the powers of Imagination, and on their natural and moral uſefulneſs in life.

Concerning the manner or turn of compoſition which prevails in this piece, little can be ſaid with propriety by the Author. He had two models; that ancient and ſimple one of the firſt Grecian poets, as it is refined by Virgil in the Georgicks, and the familiar epiſtolary way of Horace. This latter has ſeveral advantages: it admits of a greater variety of ſtyle; it more readily engages the generality of readers, as partaking more of the air of converſation, and eſpecially with the aſſiſtance of rhyme leads to a cloſer and

more concise expression. Add to this the example of the most perfect of modern poets, who has so happily applied this manner to the noblest parts of philosophy that the publick taste is in a great measure formed to it alone. Yet, after all, the subject before us, tending almost constantly to admiration and enthusiasm, seemed rather to demand a more open, pathetick, and figured style. This too appeared more natural, as the Author's aim was not so much to give formal precepts, or enter into the way of direct argumentation, as by exhibiting the most engaging prospects of nature to enlarge and harmonize the Imagination, and by that means insensibly dispose the minds of men to a similiar taste and habit of thinking in religion, morals, and civil life. It is on this account that he is so careful to point out the benevolent intention of the Author of Nature in every principle of the human constitution here insisted on, and also to unite the moral excellencies of life in the same point of view with the mere external objects of good taste; thus recommending them in common to our natural propensity for admiring what is beautiful and lovely. The same views have also led him to introduce some sentiments which may perhaps be looked upon as not quite direct to the subject; but since they bear an obvious relation to it, the authority of Virgil, the faultless model of didactick Poetry, will best support him in this particular: for the sentiments themselves he makes no apology.

THE

PLEASURES OF IMAGINATION.

Ἀσεβοῦς μέν ἐςιν ανθρωπου τας παρα του θεοῦ χαρίτας ατιμαζειν. EPICT. *apud Arrian.* II. 23.

BOOK I.

THE ARGUMENT.

THE ſubject propoſed: difficulty of treating it poetically. The ideas of the Divine Mind the origin of every quality pleaſing to the Imagination. The natural variety of conſtitution in the minds of men, with its final cauſe. The idea of a fine Imagination, and the ſtate of the mind in the enjoyment of thoſe Pleaſures which it affords. All the primary Pleaſures of the Imagination reſult from the perception of greatneſs, or wonderfulneſs, or beauty, in objects. The Pleaſure from greatneſs, with its final cauſe: Pleaſure from novelty or wonderfulneſs, with its final cauſe: Pleaſure from beauty, with its final cauſe. The connexion of beauty with truth and good, applied to the conduct of life. Invitation to the ſtudy of moral philoſophy. The different degrees of beauty in different ſpecies of objects; colour, ſhape, natural concretes, vegetables, animals; the mind. The ſublime, the fair, the wonderful, of the mind. The connexion of the Imagination and the moral faculty. Concluſion.

WITH what attractive charms this goodly frame
Of Nature touches the conſenting hearts
Of mortal men; and what the pleaſing ſtores
Which beauteous imitation thence derives
To deck the poet's or the painter's toil,
My Verſe unfolds. Attend, ye gentle Pow'rs
Of Muſical delight! and while I ſing
Your gifts, your honours, dance around my ſtrain.
Thou, ſmiling queen of ev'ry tuneful breaſt,
Indulgent Fancy! from the fruitful banks
Of Avon, whence thy roſy fingers cull
Freſh flow'rs and dews to ſprinkle on the turf

Where Shakeſpeare lies, be preſent ; and with thee
Let Fiction come, upon her vagrant wings
Wafting ten thouſand colours thro' the air,
Which by the glances of her magick eye
She blends and ſhifts at will thro' countleſs forms,
Her wild creation. Goddeſs of the Lyre,
Which rules the accents of the moving ſphere,
Wilt thou, eternal Harmony! deſcend
And join this feſtive train ? for with thee comes
The guide, the guardian of their lovely ſports,
Majeſtick Truth ! and where Truth deigns to come
Her ſiſter Liberty will not be far.
Be preſent all ye Genii! who conduct
The wand'ring footſteps of the youthful bard
New to your ſprings and ſhades, who touch his ear
With finer ſounds, who heighten to his eye
The bloom of Nature, and before him turn
The gayeſt, happieſt attitude of things.
Oft' have the laws of each poetick ſtrain
The critick verſe employ'd ; yet ſtill unſung
Lay this prime ſubject, tho' importing moſt
A Poet's name : for fruitleſs is th' attempt
By dull obedience and by creeping toil
Obſcure to conquer the ſevere aſcent
Of high Parnaſſus. Nature's kindling breath
Muſt fire the choſen genius ; Nature's hand
Muſt ſtring his nerves, and imp his eagle wings,
Impatient of the painful ſteep, to ſoar

High as the ſummit; there to breathe at large
Ethereal air with bards and ſages old,
Immortal ſons of praiſe! Theſe flatt'ring ſcenes
To this neglected labour court my ſong;
Yet not unconſcious what a doubtful taſk
To paint the fineſt features of the mind,
And to moſt ſubtle and myſterious things
Give colour, ſtrength, and motion. But the love
Of Nature and the Muſes bids explore,
Thro' ſecret paths erewhile untrod by man,
The fair poetick region, to detect
Untaſted ſprings, to drink inſpiring draughts,
And ſhade my temples with unfading flow'rs
Cull'd from the laureate vale's profound receſs,
Where never poet gain'd a wreath before.
From Heav'n my ſtrains begin; from Heav'n deſcends
The flame of genius to the human breaſt,
And love, and beauty, and poetick joy,
And inſpiration. Ere the radiant ſun
Sprang from the eaſt, or 'mid the vault of night
The moon ſuſpended her ſerener lamp,
Ere mountains, woods, or ſtreams, adorn'd the globe,
Or Wiſdom taught the ſons of men her lore,
Then liv'd th' Almighty One; then deep-retir'd
In his unfathom'd eſſence view'd the forms,
The forms eternal, of created things;
The radiant ſun, the moon's nocturnal lamp,
The mountains, woods, and ſtreams, the rolling globe,

And Wiſdom's mien celeſtial. From the firſt
Of days on them his love divine he fix'd,
His admiration, till in time complete
What he admir'd and lov'd his vital ſmile
Unfolded into being. Hence the breath
Of life informing each organick frame,
Hence the green earth and wild reſounding waves;
Hence light and ſhade alternate, warmth and cold,
And clear autumnal ſkies and vernal ſhow'rs,
And all the fair variety of things.
But not alike to ev'ry mortal eye
Is this great ſcene unveil'd; for ſince the claims
Of ſocial life to diff'rent labours urge
The active pow'rs of man, with wiſe intent
The hand of Nature on pecu'iar minds
Imprints a diff'rent bias, and to each
Decrees its province in the common toil.
To ſome ſhe taught the fabrick of the ſphere,
The changeful moon, the circuit of the ſtars,
The golden zones of heav'n: to ſome ſhe gave
To weigh the moment of eternal things,
Of time, and ſpace, and Fate's unbroken chain,
And will's quick impulſe: others by the hand
She led o'er vale and mountains, to explore
What healing virtue ſwells the tender veins
Of herbs and flow'rs, or what the beams of morn
Draw forth, diſtilling from the clifted rind
In balmy tears. But ſome to higher hopes

Were deſtin'd, ſome within a finer mould
She wrought, and temper'd with a purer flame:
To theſe the Sire Omnipotent unfolds
The world's hamonious volume, there to read
The tranſcript of himſelf. On ev'ry part
They trace the bright impreſſions of his hand:
In earth or air, the meadow's purple ſtores,
The moon's mild radiance, or the virgin's form,
Blooming with roſy ſmiles, they ſee portray'd
That uncreated beauty which delights
The mind ſupreme: they alſo feel her charms
Enamour'd; they partake th' eternal joy.
For as old Memnon's image, long renown'd
By fabling Nilus, to the quiv'ring touch
Of Titan's ray with each repulſive ſtring
Conſenting ſounded thro' the warbling air
Unbidden ſtrains; ev'n ſo did Nature's hand
To certain ſpecies of external things
Attune the finer organs of the mind:
So the glad impulſe of congenial pow'rs,
Or of ſweet ſound or fair proportion'd form,
The grace of motion, or the bloom of light,
Thrills thro' Imagination's tender frame
From nerve to nerve: all naked and alive
They catch the ſpreading rays, till now the ſoul
At length diſcloſes ev'ry tuneful ſpring,
To that harmonious movement from without
Reſponſive. Then the inexpreſſive ſtrain

Diffuſes its enchantment; Fancy dreams
Of ſacred fountains, and Elyſian groves,
And vales of bliſs: the intellectual pow'r
Bends from his awful throne a wond'ring ear,
And ſmiles: the paſſions, gently ſooth'd away,
Sink to divine repoſe, and love and joy
Alone are waking; love and joy ſerene
As airs that fan the ſummer. O! attend,
Whoe'er thou art whom theſe delights can touch,
Whoſe candid boſom the refining love
Of Nature warms; O! liſten to my Song,
And I will guide thee to her fav'rite walks,
And teach thy ſolitude her voice to hear,
And point her lovelieſt features to thy view.
  Know then, whate'er of Nature's pregnant ſtores,
Whate'er of mimick Art's reflected forms,
With love and admiration thus inflame
The pow'rs of fancy, her delighted ſons
To three illuſtrious orders have referr'd,
Three ſiſter Graces whom the painter's hand,
The poet's tongue, confeſſes; the Sublime,
The Wonderful, the Fair. I ſee them dawn!
I ſee the radiant viſions where they riſe,
More lovely than when Lucifer diſplays
His beaming forehead thro' the gates of morn
To lead the train of Phœbus and the ſpring.
  Say, why was man ſo eminently rais'd

V. 151. *Say, why was man*, &c.] In apologizing for the frequent negligences of the ſublimeſt authors of Greece, "Thoſe

Amid the vaſt creation? why ordain'd
Thro' life and death to dart his piercing eye,
With thoughts beyond the limit of his frame,
But that th' Omnipotent might ſend him forth,
In ſight of mortal and immortal pow'rs,
As on a boundleſs theatre, to run
The great career of juſtice, to exalt
His gen'rous aim to all diviner deeds,
To chaſe each partial purpoſe from his breaſt,
And thro' the miſts of paſſion and of ſenſe,
And thro' the toſſing tide of chance and pain,
To hold his courſe unfault'ring, while the voice
Of Truth and Virtue up the ſteep aſcent

"godlike geniuſes," ſays Longinus, "were well aſſured that "Nature had not intended man for a low-ſpirited or ignoble "being, but bringing us into life and the midſt of this wide "univerſe as before a multitude aſſembled at ſome heroick ſo- "lemnity that we might be ſpectators of all her magnificence, "and candidates high in emulation for the prize of glory; ſhe "has therefore implanted in our ſouls an inextinguiſhable "love of every thing great and exalted, of every thing which "appears divine beyond our comprehenſion: whence it comes "to paſs that even the whole world is not an object ſufficient "for the depth and rapidity of human Imagination, which "often ſallies forth beyond the limits of all that ſurrounds us. "Let any man caſt his eyes thro' the whole circle of our exiſt- "ence, and conſider how eſpecially it abounds in excellent "and grand objects, he will ſoon acknowledge for what en- "joyments and purſuits we were deſtined. Thus by the very "propenſity of Nature we are led to admire not little ſprings "or ſhallow rivulets, however clear and delicious, but the "Nile, the Rhine, the Danube, and, much more than all, the "ocean," *&c. Dionyſ. Longin. de Sublim.* ſect. xxiv.

Of Nature calls him to his high reward,
Th' applauding ſmile of Heav'n ? elſe wherefore burns
In mortal boſoms this unquenched hope
That breathes from day to day ſublimer things,
And mocks poſſeſſion ? wherefore darts the mind
With ſuch reſiſtleſs ardour to embrace
Majeſtick forms, impatient to be free,
Spurning the groſs control of wilful might,
Proud of the ſtrong contention of her toils,
Proud to be daring ? Who but rather turns
To heav'n's broad fire his unconſtrained view
Than to the glimm'ring of a waxen flame ?
Who that from Alpine heights his lab'ring eye
Shoots round the wide horizon to ſurvey
Nilus or Ganges rolling his bright wave
Thro' mountains, plains, thro' empires black with [ſhade,
And continents of ſand, will turn his gaze
To mark the windings of a ſcanty rill
That murmurs at his feet ? The high-born ſoul
Diſdains to reſt her heav'n-aſpiring wing
Beneath its native quarry. Tir'd of earth
And this diurnal ſcene, ſhe ſprings aloft
Thro' fields of air, purſues the flying ſtorm,
Rides on the volly'd lightning through the heav'ns,
Or yok'd with whirlwinds and the northern blaſt
Sweeps the long track of day. Then high ſhe ſoars
The blue profound, and hov'ring round the Sun
Beholds him pouring the redundant ſtream

Of light, beholds his unrelenting ſway
Bend the reluctant planets to abſolve
The fated rounds of time: thence far effus'd
She darts her ſwiftneſs up the long career
Of devious comets, thro' its burning ſigns
Exulting meaſures the perennial wheel
Of Nature, and looks back on all the ſtars,
Whoſe blended light as with a milky zone
Inveſts the orient. Now amaz'd ſhe views
The empyreal waſte, where happy ſpirits hold
Beyond this concave heav'n their calm abode,
And fields of radiance whoſe unfading light
Has travell'd the profound ſix thouſand years,
Nor yet arrives in ſight of mortal things.
Ev'n on the barriers of the world untir'd
She meditates th' eternal depth below,
Till half recoiling down the headlong ſteep
She plunges, ſoon o'erwhelm'd and ſwallow'd up

V. 202. *The empyreal waſte*, &c.] " Ne ſe peut-il pont qu'il " y a un grand eſpace au dela de la region des etoiles? Que ſe " ſoit le ciel empyree, ou non, toujours cet eſpace immenſe " qui environne tout cette region, pourra etre rempli de bon- " heur et de gloire. Il pourra etre concu comme l'ocean, ou " ſe rendent les fleuves de toutes les creatures bienheureuſes, " quand elles ſeront venues a leur perfection dans le ſyſteme " des etoiles." *Leibnitz dans la Theodicee*, part. I. ſect. 19.

V. 204.-- *whoſe unfading light*, &c.] It was a notion of the great Mr. Huygens that there may be fixed ſtars at ſuch a diſtance from our ſolar ſyſtem as that their light ſhould not have had time to reach us even from the creation of the world to this day.

In that immense of being. There her hopes
Rest at the fated goal; for from the birth
Of mortal man the Sovran Maker said
That not in humble nor in brief delight,
Not in the fading echoes of renown,
Pow'rs, purple robes, nor Pleasure's flow'ry lap,
The soul should find enjoyment; but from these
Turning disdainful to an equal good
Thro' all th' ascent of things enlarge her view,
Till ev'ry bound at length should disappear
And infinite perfection close the scene.
    Call now to mind what high capacious pow'rs
Lie folded up in man; how far beyond
The praise of mortals may th' eternal growth
Of Nature to perfection half divine
Expand the blooming soul: what pity then
Should sloth's unkindly fogs depress to earth
Her tender blossom, choke the streams of life,
And blast her spring! Far otherwise design'd
Almighty Wisdom; Nature's happy cares
Th' obedient heart far otherwise incline;
Witness the sprightly joy when aught unknown
Strikes the quick sense, and wakes each active pow'r
To brisker measures; witness the neglect
Of all familiar prospects, tho' beheld

V. 234.---*the neglect---Of all familiar prospects*, &c.] It is here said that in consequence of the love of novelty objects which at first were highly delightful to the mind, lose that effect by repeated attention to them; but the instance of habit

> With tranſport once, the fond attentive gaze
> Of young Aſtoniſhment, the ſober zeal
> Of Age commenting on prodigious things.

is oppoſed to this obſervation; for there objects at firſt diſtaſteful are in time rendered entirely agreeable by repeated attention.

The difficulty in this caſe will be removed if we conſider that, when objects at firſt agreeable loſe that influence by frequently recurring, the mind is wholly paſſive and the perception involuntary; but habit on the other hand generally ſuppoſes choice and activity accompanying it; ſo that the pleaſure ariſes here not from the object but from the mind's conſcious determination of its own activity, and conſequently increaſes in proportion to the frequency of that determination.

It will ſtill be urged perhaps that a familiarity with diſagreeable objects renders them at length acceptable, even when there is no room for the mind to reſolve or act at all: in this caſe the appearance muſt be accounted for one of theſe ways:

The pleaſure from habit may be merely negative. The object at firſt gave uneaſineſs; this uneaſineſs gradually wears off as the object grows familiar; and the mind finding it at laſt entirely removed, reckons its ſituation really pleaſureable compared with what it had experienced before.

The diſlike conceived of the object at firſt might be owing to prejudice or want of attention; conſequently the mind being neceſſitated to review it often may at length perceive its own miſtake, and be reconciled to what it had looked on with averſion; in which caſe a ſort of inſtinctive juſtice naturally leads it to make amends for the injury by running toward the other extreme of fondneſs and attachment.

Or, laſtly, though the object itſelf ſhould always continue diſagreeable, yet circumſtances of pleaſure or good fortune may occur along with it; thus an aſſociation may ariſe in the mind, and the object never be remembered without thoſe pleaſing circumſtances attending it, by which means the diſagreeable impreſſion which it at firſt occaſioned will in time be quite obliterated.

For ſuch the bounteous providence of Heav'n,
In ev'ry breaſt implanting this deſire
Of objects new and ſtrange, to urge us on
With unremitted labour to purſue
Thoſe ſacred ſtores that wait the ripening ſoul
In Truth's exhauſtleſs boſom. What need words
To paint its pow'r? For this the daring youth
Breaks from his weeping mother's anxious arms
In foreign climes to rove; the penſive ſage,
Heedleſs of ſleep or midnight's harmful damp,
Hangs oe'r the ſickly taper; and untir'd
The virgin follows, with enchanted ſtep,
The mazes of ſome wild and wondrous tale
From morn to eve, unmindful of her form,
Unmindful of the happy dreſs that ſtole
The wiſhes of the youth when ev'ry maid
With envy pin'd. Hence, finally, by night
The village matron round the blazing hearth
Suſpends the infant audience with her tales,
Breathing aſtoniſhment! of witching rhymes
And evil ſpirits, of the death-bed call

V. 240.—*this deſire.—Of objects new and ſtrange*, &c.] Theſe two ideas are often confounded, though it is evident the mere novelty of an object makes it agreeable, even where the mind is not affected with the leaſt degree of wonder; whereas wonder indeed always implies novelty, being never excited by common or well known appearances. But the pleaſure in both caſes is explicable from the ſame final cauſe, the acquiſition of knowledge and enlargement of our views of Nature: on this account it is natural to treat of them together.

Of him who robb'd the widow and devour'd
The orphan's portion, of unquiet ſouls
Ris'n from the grave to eaſe the heavy guilt
Of deeds in life conceal'd, of ſhapes that walk
At dead of night and clank their chains, and wave
The torch of hell around the murd'rer's bed?
At ev'ry ſolemn-pauſe the crowd recoil,
Gazing each other ſpeechleſs, and congeal'd
With ſhiv'ring ſighs till, eager for th' event,
Around the beldame all erect they hang,
Each trembling heart with grateful terrors quell'd.
But lo! diſclos'd in all her ſmiling pomp,
Where Beauty onward moving claims the verſe
Her charms inſpire: the freely flowing verſe
In thy immortal praiſe, O form divine!
Smooths her mellifluent ſtream. Thee Beauty! thee
The regal dome and thy enliv'ning ray
The moſſy roofs adore: thou, better ſun!
For ever beameſt on th' enchanted heart,
Love, and harmonious wonder, and delight
Poetick. Brighteſt progeny of Heav'n!
How ſhall I trace thy features? where ſelect
The roſeate hues to emulate thy bloom?
Haſte then, my Song! thro' Nature's wide expanſe,
Haſte then, and gather all her comelieſt wealth,
Whate'er bright ſpoils the florid earth contains,
Whate'er the waters or the liquid air,
To deck thy lovely labour. Wilt thou fly

With laughing Autumn to th' Atlantick iſles,
And range with him th' Heſperian field, and ſee
Where'er his fingers touch the fruitful grove,
The branches ſhoot with gold, where'er his ſtep
Marks the glad ſoil the tender cluſters grow
With purple ripeneſs, and inveſt each hill
As with the bluſhes of an ev'ning ſky?
Or wilt though rather ſtoop thy vagrant plume
Where gliding thro' his daughter's honour'd ſhades
The ſmooth Peneus from his glaſſy flood
Reflects purpureal Tempe's pleaſant ſcene?
Fair Tempe! haunt belov'd of ſylvan pow'rs,
Of Nymphs and Fauns; where in the Golden Age
They play'd in ſecret on the ſhady brink
With ancient Pan, while round their choral ſteps
Young Hours and genial gales with conſtant hand
Shower'd bloſſoms, odours, ſhower'd ambroſial dews,
And ſpring's Elyſian bloom. Her flow'ry ſtore
To thee nor Tempe ſhall refuſe nor watch
Of winged Hydra guard Heſperian fruits
From thy free ſpoil. O! bear then unreprov'd
Thy ſmiling treaſures to the green receſs
Where young Dione ſtays: with ſweeteſt airs
Entice her forth to lend her angel form
For Beauty's honour'd image. Hither turn
Thy graceful footſteps; hither, gentle Maid!
Incline thy poliſh'd forehead: let thy eyes
Effuſe the mildneſs of their azure dawn,

And may the fanning breezes waft aſide
Thy radiant lock, diſcloſing as it bends
With airy ſoftneſs from the marble neck
The cheek fair-blooming and the roſy lip,
Where winning Smiles and Pleaſures ſweet as Love
With ſanctity and wiſdom temp'ring blend
Their ſoft allurement: then the pleaſing force
Of Nature, and her kind parental care,
Worthier I'd ſing; then all th' enamour'd youth,
With each admiring virgin, to my lyre
Should throng attentive, while I point on high
Where Beauty's living image, like the Morn
That wakes in Zephyr's arms the bluſhing May,
Moves onward, or as Venus when ſhe ſtood
Effulgent on the pearly car and ſmil'd
Freſh from the deep, and conſcious of her form,
To ſee the Tritons tune their vocal ſhells,
And each cerulean ſiſter of the flood
With loud acclaim attend her o'er the waves
To ſeek th' Idalian bow'r. Ye ſmiling band
Of Youths and Virgins! who thro' all the maze
Of young deſire with rival ſteps purſue
This charm of beauty, if the pleaſing toil
Can yield a moment's reſpite hither turn
Your favourable ear, and truſt my words.
I do not mean to wake the gloomy form
Of Superſtition dreſs'd in Wiſdom's garb
To damp your tender hopes; I do not mean

To bid the jealous Thund'rer fire the heav'ns,
Or ſhapes infernal rend the groaning earth,
To fright you from your joys: my cheerful Song
With better omens call you to the field,
Pleas'd with your gen'rous ardour in the chaſe,
And warm like you. Then tell me, for ye know,
Does Beauty ever deign to dwell where health
And active uſe are ſtrangers? is her charm
Confeſt in aught whoſe moſt peculiar ends
Are lame and fruitleſs? or did Nature mean
This pleaſing call the herald of a lie,
To hide the ſhame of diſcord and diſeaſe,
And catch with fair hypocriſy the heart
Of idle Faith? O no! with better cares
Th' indulgent mother, conſcious how infirm
Her offspring tread the paths of good and ill,
By this illuſtrious image, in each kind
Still moſt illuſtrious where the object holds
Its native pow'rs moſt perfect, ſhe by this
Illumes the headſtrong impulſe of Deſire,
And ſanctifies his choice. The gen'rous glebe
Whom boſom ſmiles with verdure, the clear track
Of ſtreams delicious to the thirſty ſoul,
The bloom of nectar'd fruitage ripe to ſenſe,
And ev'ry charm of animated things,
Are only pledges of a ſtate ſincere,
Th' integrity and order of their frame
When all is well within, and ev'ry end

Accompliſh'd. Thus was Beauty ſent from Heav'n
The lovely miniſtreſs of Truth and Good
In this dark world; for Truth and Good are one,
And Beauty dwells in them and they in her

V. 374. --*Truth and Good are one,--And Beauty dwells in them,* &c.] "Do you imagine," ſays Socrates to Ariſtippus, "that what is good is not beautiful? have you not obſerved "that theſe appearances always coincide? Virtue, for inſtance, "in the ſame reſpect as to which we call it good is ever ac- "knowledged to be beautiful alſo. In the characters of men "we always join the two denominations together. ¶ The "beauty of human bodies correſponds in like manner with "that economy of parts which conſtitutes them good, and in "every circumſtance of life the ſame object is conſtantly ac- "counted both beautiful and good, inaſmuch as it anſwers "the purpoſes for which it was deſigned." *Xenoph. Memoral. Socrat.* lib. iii. cap. 8.

This excellent obſervation has been illuſtrated and extended by the noble reſtorer of ancient philoſophy. See *The Characteriſticks*, vol. ii. p. 339 and 422, and vol. iii. p. 181. And another ingenious author has particularly ſhewn that it holds in the general laws of Nature, in the works of art, and the conduct of the ſciences. *Inquiry into the Original of our Ideas of Beauty and Virtue*, Treat. i. ſect. 8. As to the connexion between beauty and truth, there are two opinions concerning it. Some philoſophers aſſert an independent and invariable law in Nature, in conſequence of which "all rational beings muſt "alike perceive beauty in ſome certain proportions, and defor- "mity in the contrary." And this neceſſity being ſuppoſed the ſame with that which commands the aſſent or diſſent of the underſtanding, it follows of courſe that beauty is founded on the univerſal and unchangeable law of truth.

But others there are who believe beauty to be merely a relative and arbitrary thing; that indeed it was a benevolent

¶ This the Athenians did in a peculiar manner by the words *Kalokagathos, Kalokagathia*

With like participation: wherefore then,
O sons of Earth! would ye diſſolve the tie?
O! wherefore with a raſh impetuous aim
Seek ye thoſe flow'ry joys with which the hand
Of laviſh Fancy paints each flatt'ring ſcene
Where Beauty ſeems to dwell, nor once inquire
Where is the ſanction of eternal truth,
Or where the ſeal of undeceitful good,
To ſave your ſearch from folly! Wanting theſe
Lo! Beauty withers in your void embrace,
And with the glitt'ring of an idiot's toy
Did fancy mock your vows. Nor let the gleam
Of youthful hope that ſhines upon your hearts

proviſion in Nature to annex ſo delightful a ſenſation to thoſe objects which are beſt and moſt perfect in themſelves, that ſo we might be engaged to the choice of them at once, and without having to infer their uſefulneſs from their ſtructure and effects; but that it is not impoſſible, in a phyſical ſenſe, that two beings of equal capacities for truth ſhould perceive one of them beauty and the other deformity in the ſame proportions. And upon this ſuppoſition, by that truth which is always connected with beauty, nothing more can be meant than the conformity of any object to thoſe proportions upon which after careful examination the beauty of that ſpecies is found to depend. Polycletus, for inſtance, a famous ancient ſculptor, from an accurate menſuration of the ſeveral parts of the moſt perfect human bodies, deduced a canon or ſyſtem of proportions which was the rule of all ſucceeding artiſts. Suppoſe a ſtatue modelled according to this, a man of mere natural taſte upon looking at it, without entering into its proportions, confeſſes and admires its beauty; whereas a profeſſor of the art applies his meaſures to the head, the neck, or the hand, and without attending to its beauty pronounces the workmanſhip to be juſt and true.

Be chill'd or clouded at this awful taſk
To learn the lore of undeceitful good
And truth eternal. Tho' the pois'nous charms
Of baleful ſuperſtition guide the feet
Of ſervile numbers thro' a dreary way
To their abode, thro' deſerts, thorns, and mire,
And leave the wretched pilgrim all forlorn
To muſe at laſt amid the ghoſtly gloom
Of graves, and hoary vaults, and cloiſter'd cells;
To walk with ſpectres thro' the midnight ſhade,
And to the ſcreaming owl's accurſed ſong
Attune the dreadful workings of his heart;
Yet be not ye diſmay'd; a gentler ſtar
Your lovely ſearch illumines. From the grove
Where Wiſdom talk'd with her Athenian ſons
Could my ambitious hand intwine a wreath
Of Plato's olive with the Mantuan bay,
Then ſhould my pow'rful Verſe at once diſpel
Thoſe monkiſh horrours, then in light divine
Diſcloſe th' Elyſian proſpect, where the ſteps
Of thoſe whom Nature charms thro' blooming walks,
Thro' fragrant mountains and poetick ſtreams,
Amid the train of ſages, heroes, bards,
Led by their winged Genius and the choir
Of laurell'd Science and harmonious Art,
Proceed exulting to th' eternal ſhrine
Where Truth conſpicuous with her ſiſter twins,
The undivided partners of her ſway,
With Good and Beauty reigns. O let not us,

Lull'd by luxurious Pleaſure's languid ſtrain,
Or crouching to the frowns of bigot Rage,
O let us not a moment pauſe to join
That godlike band! and if the gracious pow'r
Who firſt awaken'd my untutor'd ſong
Will to my invocation breathe anew
The tuneful ſpirit, then thro' all our paths
Ne'er ſhall the ſound of this devoted lyre
Be wanting: whether on the roſy mead,
When ſummer ſmiles, to warn the melting heart
Of Luxury's allurement, whether firm
Againſt the torrent and the ſtubborn hill
To urge bold Virtue's unremitted nerve,
And wake the ſtrong divinity of ſoul
That conquers Chance and Fate, or whether ſtruck
For ſounds of triumph to proclaim her toils
Upon the lofty ſummit, round her brow
To twine the wreath of incorruptive praiſe,
To trace her hallow'd light thro' future worlds,
And bleſs Heav'n's image in the heart of man.
  Thus with a faithful aim have we preſum'd
Advent'rous to delineate Nature's form,
Whether in vaſt majeſtick pomp array'd,
Or dreſt for pleaſing wonder, or ſerene
In Beauty's roſy ſmile. It now remains
Thro' various Being's fair proportion'd ſcale
To trace the riſing luſtre of her charms
From their firſt twilight, ſhining forth at length

To full meridian ſplendour. Of degree
The leaſt and lowlieſt in th' effuſive warmth
Of colours mingling with a random blaze
Doth Beauty dwell; then higher in the line
And variation of determin'd ſhape,
Where Truth's eternal meaſures mark the bound
Of circle, cube, or ſphere: the third aſcent
Unites this vary'd ſymmetry of parts
With colour's bland allurement, as the pearl
Shines in the concave of its azure bed,
And painted ſhells indent their ſpeckled wreath.
Then more attractive riſe the blooming forms
Thro' which the breath of Nature has infus'd
Her genial pow'r to draw with pregnant veins
Nutricious moiſture from the bounteous earth
In fruit and ſeed prolifick; thus the flow'rs
Their purple honours with the ſpring reſume,
And ſuch the ſtately tree which autumn bends
With bluſhing treaſures. But more lovely ſtill
Is Nature's charm where to the full conſent
Of complicated members, to the bloom
Of colour and the vital change of growth
Life's holy flame and piercing ſenſe are giv'n,
And active motion ſpeaks the temper'd ſoul:
So moves the bird of Juno, ſo the ſteed
With rival ardour beats the duſty plain,
And faithful dogs with eager airs of joy
Salute their fellows. Thus doth Beauty dwell
There moſt conſpicuous, ev'n in outward ſhape,

Where dawns the high expreſſion of a mind,
By ſteps conducting our enraptur'd ſearch
To that Eternal Origin whoſe pow'r
Thro' all th' unbounded ſymmetry of things
Like rays effulging from the parent ſun,
This endleſs mixture of her charms diffus'd.
Mind, mind alone, (bear witneſs Earth and Heav'n!)
The living fountains in itſelf contains
Of beauteous and ſublime: here hand in hand
Sit paramount the Graces, here enthron'd
Celeſtial Venus with divineſt airs
Invites the ſoul to never fading joy.
Look then abroad thro' Nature, to the range
Of planets, ſuns, and adamantine ſpheres,
Wheeling unſhaken thro' the void immenſe,
And ſpeak, O Man! does this capacious ſcene
With half that kindling majeſty dilate
Thy ſtrong conception as when Brutus roſe
Refulgent from the ſtroke of Cæſar's fate
Amid the crowd of patriots, and his arm
Aloft extending, like eternal Jove
When guilt brings down the thunder, call'd aloud
On Tully's name, and ſhook his crimſon ſteel,
And bad the father of his country Hail!
For lo the tyrant proſtrate on the duſt!

V. 492. *As when Brutus roſe*, &c.] Cicero himſelf deſcribes this fact---"Cæſare interfecto---ſtatim cruentum alte extol-"lens M. Brutus pugionem, Ciceronem nominatim exclama-"vit, atque ei recuperatam libertatem eſt gratulatus." *Cic. Philipp.* ii. 12

And Rome again is free? Is aught so fair
In all the dewy landscapes of the spring,
In the bright eye of Hesper or the Morn,
In Nature's fairest forms, is aught so fair
As virtuous friendship? as the candid blush
Of him who strives with Fortune to be just?
The graceful tear that streams for others' woes?
Or the mild majesty of private life,
Where Peace with ever-blooming olive crowns
The gate, where Honour's lib'ral hands effuse
Unenvy'd treasures, and the snowy wings
Of Innocence and Love protect the scene?
Once more search undismay'd the dark profound
Where Nature works in secret, view the beds
Of mineral treasure, and th' eternal vault
That bounds the hoary ocean; trace the forms
Of atoms moving with incessant change
Their elemental round, behold the seeds
Of being, and the energy of life
Kindling the mass with ever active flame,
Then to the secrets of the working Mind
Attentive turn; from dim oblivion call
Her fleet ideal band, and bid them go;
Break thro' time's barrier, and o'ertake the hour
That saw the heav'ns created; then declare
If aught were found in those external scenes
To move thy wonder now. For what are all
The forms which brute unconscious matter wears,
Greatness of bulk, or symmetry of parts?

Not reaching to the heart soon feeble grows
The superficial impulse; dull their charms,
And satiate soon, and pall the languid eye.
Not so the moral species, nor the powers
Of genius and design: th' ambitious Mind
There sees herself; by these congenial forms
Touch'd and awaken'd, with intenser act
She bends each nerve, and meditates well pleas'd
Her features in the mirror: for of all
The inhabitants of earth to man alone
Creative Wisdom gave to lift his eye
To truth's eternal measures; thence to frame
The sacred laws of action and of will,
Discerning justice from unequal deeds,
And temperance from folly. But beyond
This energy of truth, whose dictates bind
Assenting reason, the benignant Sire,
To deck the honour'd paths of just and good,
Has added bright Imagination's rays,
Where Virtue rising from the awful depth
Of Truth's mysterious bosom doth forsake
Th' unadorn'd condition of her birth,
And dress'd by Fancy in ten thousand hues
Assumes a various feature, to attract

V. 548. *Where Virtue rising from the awful depth---Of Truth's mysterious bosom*, &c.] According to the opinion of those who assert moral obligation to be founded on an immutable and universal law, and that which is usually called the moral sense to be determined by the peculiar temper of the Imagination and the earliest associations of ideas

With charms reſponſive to each gazer's eye
The hearts of men. Amid his rural walk
Th' ingenuous youth, whom ſolitude inſpires
With pureſt wiſhes, from the penſive ſhade
Beholds her moving like a virgin Muſe
That wakes her lyre to ſome indulgent theme
Of harmony and wonder, while among
The herd of ſervile minds her ſtrenuous form
Indignant flaſhes on the patriot's eye,
And thro' the rolls of memory appeals
To ancient honour, or, in act ſerene
Yet watchful, raiſes the majeſtick ſword
Of publick pow'r, from dark Ambition's reach
To guard the ſacred volume of the laws.
  Genius of ancient Greece! whoſe faithful ſteps
Well pleas'd I follow thro' the ſacred paths
Of Nature and of Science; Nurſe divine
Of all heroick deeds and fair deſires!
O let the breath of thy extended praiſe
Inſpire my kindling boſom to the height
Of this untempted theme! Nor be my thoughts
Preſumptuous counted if amid the calm
That ſooths this vernal ev'ning into ſmiles
I ſteal impatient from the ſordid haunts
Of Strife and low Ambition to attend
Thy ſacred preſence in the ſylvan ſhade,
By their malignant footſteps ne'er profan'd,
Deſcend propitious to my favour'd eye!

Such in thy mien, thy warm exalted air,
As when the Perſian tyrant foil'd, and flung
With ſhame and deſperation, gnaſh'd his teeth
To ſee thee rend the pageants of his throne,
And at the lightning of thy lifted ſpear
Crouch'd like a ſlave. Bring all thy martial ſpoils,
Thy palms, thy laurels, thy triumphal ſongs,
Thy ſmiling band of arts, thy godlike ſires
Of civil wiſdom, thy heroick youth,
Warm from the ſchools of glory. Guide my way
Thro' fair Lyceum's walk, the green retreats
Of Academus, and the thymy vale
Where oft' enchanted with Socratick ſounds
Iliſſus pure devolv'd his tuneful ſtream
In gentler murmurs. From the blooming ſtore,
Of theſe auſpicious fields may I unblam'd
Tranſplant ſome living bloſſoms to adorn
My native clime; while far above the flight
Of fancy's plume aſpiring I unlock
The ſprings of ancient wiſdom; while I join
Thy name, thrice honour'd! with th' immortal praiſe
Of nature; while to my compatriot youth
I point the high example of thy ſons,
And tune to Attick themes the Britiſh lyre.

V. 591. *Lyceum.*] The ſchool of Ariſtotle.
V. 592. *Academus.*] The ſchool of Plato.
V. 594. *Iliſſus.*] One of the rivers on which Athens was ſituated. Plato in ſome of his fineſt Dialogues lays the ſcene of the converſation with Socrates on its banks.

END OF BOOK FIRST.

PLEASURES OF IMAGINATION.

BOOK II.

THE ARGUMENT.

THE separation of the works of Imagination from philosophy the cause of their abuse among the Moderns. Prospect of their reunion under the influence of publick liberty. Enumeration of accidental Pleasures, which increase the effect of objects delightful to the Imagination. The Pleasures of sense. Particular circumstances of the mind. Discovery of truth. Perception of contrivance and design. Emotion of the passions. All the natural passions partake of a pleasing sensation; with the final cause of this constitution illustrated by an Allegorical Vision, and exemplified in sorrow, pity, terrour, and indignation.

WHEN shall the laurel and the vocal string
Resume their honours? when shall we behold
The tuneful tongue, the Promethean hand,
Aspire to ancient praise? Alas! how faint,
How slow, the dawn of beauty and of truth
Breaks the reluctant shades of Gothick night
Which yet involve the nations! Long they groan'd
Beneath the furies of rapacious Force,
Oft as the gloomy North with iron swarms
Tempest'ous pouring from her frozen caves
Blasted the Italian shore, and swept the works
Of Liberty and Wisdom down the gulf
Of all devouring Night. As long immur'd
In noon-tide darkness by the glimm'ring lamp
Each Muse and each fair Science pin'd away
The sordid hours, while foul Barbarian hands

Their myſteries profan'd, unſtrung the lyre,
And chain'd the ſoaring pinion down to earth.
At laſt the Muſes roſe and ſpurn'd their bond,
And wildly warbling ſcatter'd as they flew
Their blooming wreaths from fair Vaucluſa's bow'rs
To Arno's myrtle border and the ſhore
Of ſoft Parthenope. But ſtill the rage
Of dire Ambition and gigantick Pow'r

V. 19. *At laſt the Muſes roſe*, &c.] About the age of Hugh Capet, founder of the third race of French kings, the poets of Provence were in high reputation, a ſort of ſtrolling bards or rhapſodiſts, who went about the courts of princes and noblemen entertaining them at feſtivals with muſick and poetry. They attempted both the epick, ode, and ſatire, and abounded in a wild and fantaſtick vein of fable, partly allegorical, and partly founded on traditionary legends of the Saracen wars. Theſe were the rudiments of Italian poetry. But their taſte and compoſition muſt have been extremely barbarous, as we may judge by thoſe who followed the turn of their fable in much politer times, ſuch as Boiardo, Bernardo, Taſſo, Arioſto, &c.

V. 21. *Vaucluſa*.] The famous retreat of Franciſco Petrarcha, the father of Italian poetry, and his miſtreſs Laura, a lady of Avignon.

V. 22. *Arno*.] The river which runs by Florence, the birth-place of Dante and Boccacio.

V. 23. *Parthenope*.] Or Naples, the birth-place of Sannazaro. The great Torquato Taſſo was born at Sorrento in the kingdom of Naples.

Ibid.——the rage——Of dire Ambition, &c.] This relates to the cruel wars among the republicks of Italy, and abominable politicks of its little princes, about the fifteenth century. Theſe at laſt, in the conjunction with the Papal power, entirely extinguiſhed the ſpirit of liberty in that country, and eſtabliſhed that abuſe of the fine arts which has been ſince propagated over all Europe.

From publick aims and from the buſy walk
Of civil commerce drove the bolder train
Of penetrating Science to the cells
Where ſtudious Eaſe conſumes the ſilent hour
In ſhadowy ſearches and unfruitful care.
Thus from their guardians torn the tender arts
Of mimick fancy and harmonious joy
To prieſtly domination and the luſt
Of lawleſs courts their amiable toil

V. 30. *Thus from their guardians torn the tender arts*, &c.] Nor were they only loſers by the ſeparation; for philoſophy itſelf, to uſe the words of a noble philoſopher, "being thus ſe-"vered by the ſprightly arts and ſciences, muſt conſequently "grow droniſh, inſipid, pedantick, uſeleſs, and directly oppo-"ſite to the real knowledge and practice of the world." Inſomuch that "a gentleman," ſays another excellent writer, "cannot eaſily bring himſelf to like ſo auſtere and ungainly a "form; ſo greatly is it changed from what was once the de-"light of the fineſt gentlemen of Antiquity, and their recrea-"tion after the hurry of publick affairs!" From this condition it cannot be recovered but by uniting it once more with the works of Imagination; and we have had the pleaſure of obſerving a very great progreſs made towards their union in England within theſe few years. It is hardly poſſible to conceive them at a greater diſtance from each other that at the Revolution, when Locke ſtood at the head of one party and Dryden of the other. But the general ſpirit of liberty which has ever ſince been growing naturally invited our men of wit and genius to improve that influence which the arts of perſuaſion gave them with the people, by applying them to ſubjects of importance to ſociety. Thus poetry and eloquence became conſiderable, and philoſophy is now of courſe obliged to borrow of their embelliſhments in order even to gain audience with the publick

For three inglorious ages have resign'd,
In vain reluctant, and Torquato's tongue
Was tun'd for slavish Pæans at the throne
Of tinsel Pomp, and Raphael's magick hand
Effus'd its fair creation to enchant
The fond adoring herd in Latian fanes
To blind belief, while on their prostrate necks
The sable tyrant plants his heel secure.
But now, behold the radiant era dawns
When Freedom's ample fabrick, fix'd at length
For endless years on Albion's happy shore,
In full proportion once more shall extend
To all the kindred pow'rs of social bliss
A common mansion, a parental roof:
There shall the Virtues, there shall Wisdom's train,
Their long lost friends rejoining, as of old,
Embrace the smiling family of Arts,
The Muses and the Graces. Then no more
Shall Vice, distracting their delicious gifts
To aims abhorr'd, with high distaste and scorn
Turn from their charms the philosophick eye,
The patriot bosom; then no more the paths
Of publick care or intellectual toil
Alone by footsteps haughty and severe
In gloomy state be trod: th' harmonious Muse
And her persuasive sisters then shall plant
Their shelt'ring laurels o'er the bleak ascent,
And scatter flow'rs along the rugged way.

Arm'd with the lyre already have we dar'd
To pierce divine Philoſophy's retreats
And teach the Muſe her lore, already ſtrove
Their long divided honours to unite,
While temp'ring this deep argument we ſang
Of Truth and Beauty. Now the ſame glad taſk
Impends; now urging our ambitious toil
We haſten to recount the various ſprings
Of adventitious Pleaſure, which adjoin
Their grateful influence to the prime effect
Of objects grand or beauteous, and enlarge
The complicated joy. The ſweets of ſenſe
Do they not oft' with kind acceſſion flow
To raiſe harmonious Fancy's native charm?
So while we taſte the fragrance of the roſe
Glows not her bluſh the fairer? while we view
Amid the noontide walk a limpid rill
Guſh thro' the trickling herbage, to the thirſt
Of ſummer yielding the delicious draught
Of cool refreſhment, o'er the moſſy brink
Shines not the ſurface clearer, and the waves
With ſweeter muſick murmur as they flow?
Nor this alone. The various lot of life
Oft' from external circumſtance aſſumes
A moment's diſpoſition to rejoice
In thoſe delights which at a diff'rent hour
Would paſs unheeded. Fair the face of ſpring
When rural ſongs and odours wake the Morn

To ev'ry eye: but how much more to his
Round whom the bed of ficknefs long diffus'd
Its melancholy gloom! how doubly fair
When firft with frefh-born vigour he inhales
The balmy breeze, and feels the bleffed fun
Warm at his bofom, from the fprings of life
Chafing oppreffive damps and languid pain!
  Or fhall I mention where celeftial Truth
Her awful light difclofes, to beftow
A more majeftick pomp on Beauty's frame?
For man loves knowledge, and the beams of truth
More welcome touch his underftanding's eye
Than all the blandifhments of found his ear,
Than all of tafte his tongue. Nor ever yet
The melting rainbow's vernal-tinctur'd hues
To me have fhone fo pleafing as when firft
The hand of Science pointed out the path
In which the funbeams gleaming from the weft
Fall on the watry cloud whofe darkfome veil
Involves the orient, and that trickling fhow'r
Piercing thro' ev'ry cryftalline convex
Of cluft'ring dew-drops to their flight oppos'd
Recoil at length where concave all behind
Th' internal furface of each glaffy orb
Repels their forward paffage into air,
That thence direct they feek the radiant goal
From which their courfe began, and as they ftrike
In diff'rent lines the gazer's obvious eye

Aſſume a diff'rent luſtre thro' the brede
Of colours changing from the ſplendid roſe
To the pale violet's dejected hue.
Or ſhall we touch that kind acceſs of joy
That ſprings to each fair object while we trace
Thro' all its fabrick Wiſdom's artful aim
Diſpoſing ev'ry part, and gaining ſtill
By means proportion'd her benignant end?
Speak ye the pure delight whoſe favour'd ſteps
The lamp of Science thro' the jealous maze.
Of Nature guides when haply you reveal
Her ſecret honours, whether in the ſky,
The beauteous laws of light, the central pow'rs,
That wheel the penſile planets round the year,
Whether in wonders of the rowling deep,
Or the rich fruits of all-ſuſtaining earth,
Or fine-adjuſted ſprings of life and ſenſe,
Ye ſcan the counſels of their author's hand.
What, when to raiſe the meditated ſcene
The flame of paſſion thro' the ſtruggling ſoul
Deep-kindled ſhows acroſs that ſudden blaze
The object of its rapture, vaſt of ſize,
With fiercer colours and a night of ſhade?
What? like a ſtorm from their capacious bed
The ſounding ſeas o'erwhelming, when the might
Of theſe eruptions working from the depth
Of man's ſtrong apprehenſion ſhakes his frame
Ev'n to the baſe, from ev'ry naked ſenſe

Of pain or pleaſure diſſipating all
Opinion's feeble cov'rings, and the veil
Spun from the cobweb faſhion of the times
To hide the feeling heart? then Nature ſpeaks
Her genuine language, and the words of men,
Big with the very motion of their ſouls,
Declare with what accumulated force
Th' impetuous nerve of paſſion urges on
The native weight and energy of things.

Yet more her honours: where nor beauty claims
Nor ſhews of good the thirſty ſenſe allure
From paſſion's pow'r alone our nature holds
Eſſential Pleaſure. Paſſion's fierce illapſe
Rouſes the mind's whole fabrick, with ſupplies
Of daily impulſe keeps th' elaſtick powers

V. 157. *From paſſion's pow'r alone*, &c.] This very myſterious kind of Pleaſure, which is often found in the exerciſe of paſſions generally counted painful, has been taken notice of by ſeveral authors. Lucretius reſolves it into ſelflove:

" Suave mari magno," &c. lib. ii. 1.

As if a man was never pleaſed in being moved at the diſtreſs of a tragedy without a cool reflection that though theſe fictitious perſonages were ſo unhappy, yet he himſelf was perfectly at eaſe and in ſafety. The ingenious author of the *Reflections Critiques ſur la Poeſie et ſur la Peinture*, accounts for it by the general delight which the mind takes in its own activity, and the abhorrence it feels of an indolent and inattentive ſtate: and this joined with the moral approbation of its own temper, which attends theſe emotions when natural and juſt, is certainly the true foundation of the pleaſure, which as it is the origin and baſis of tragedy and epick deſerved a very particular conſideration in this poem.

Intenſely poiz'd and poliſhes anew,
By that colliſion, all the fine machine;
Elſe ruſt would riſe, and foulneſs, by degrees
Incumb'ring, choke at laſt what Heav'n deſign'd
For ceaſeleſs motion and a round of toil.
—But ſay, does ev'ry paſſion thus to man
Adminiſter delight? That name indeed
Becomes the roſy breath of Love, becomes
The radiant ſmiles of Joy, th' applauding hand
Of Admiration: but the bitter ſhow'r
That Sorrow ſheds upon a brother's grave,
But the dumb palſy of nocturnal Fear,
Or thoſe conſuming fires that gnaw the heart
Of panting Indignation, find we there
To move delight?—Then liſten while my tongue
Th' unalter'd will of Heav'n with faithful awe
Reveals, what old Harmodius wont to teach
My early age; Harmodius! who had weigh'd
Within his learned mind whate'er the ſchools
Of Wiſdom or thy lonely-whiſp'ring voice
O faithful Nature! dictate of the laws
Which govern and ſupport this mighty frame
Of univerſal being: oft' the hours
From morn to eve have ſtol'n unmark'd away
While mute attention hung upon his lips;
As thus the ſage his awful tale began:
"'Twas in the windings of an ancient wood,
"When ſpotleſs youth with ſolitude reſigns

" To ſweet philoſophy the ſtudious day,
" What time pale Autumn ſhades the ſilent eve,
" Muſing I rov'd. Of good and evil much,
" And much of mortal man, my thought revolv'd;
" When ſtarting full on Fancy's guſhing eye
" The mournful image of Parthenia's fate
" That hour, O long belov'd and long deplor'd!
" When blooming youth nor gentleſt Wiſdom's arts,
" Nor Hymen's honours gather'd for thy brow,
" Nor all thy lover's, all thy father's tears,
" Avail'd to ſnatch thee from the cruel grave,
" Thy agonizing looks, thy laſt farewell,
" Struck to the inmoſt feeling of my ſoul
" As with the hand of Death! At once the ſhade
" More horrid nodded o'er me, and the winds
" With hoarſer murm'ring ſhook the branches. Dark
" As midnight ſtorms the ſcene of human things
" Appear'd before me; deſerts, burning ſands,
" Where the parch'd adder dies; the frozen ſouth,
" And deſolation blaſting all the weſt
" With rapine and with murder: tyrant Pow'r
" Here ſits enthron'd with blood; the baleful charms
" Of Superſtition there infect the ſkies,
" And turn the ſun to horrour. Gracious Heav'n!
" What is the life of man? or cannot theſe,
" Not theſe portents, thy awful will ſuffice?
" That propagated thus beyond their ſcope
" They riſe to act their cruelties anew

"In my afflicted boſom, thus decreed
"The univerſal ſenſitive of pain,
"The wretched heir of evils not its own!
"Thus I impatient; when at once effus'd
"A flaſhing torrent of celeſtial day,
"Burſt thro' the ſhadowy void. With ſlow deſcent
"A purple cloud came floating thro' the ſky,
"And pois'd at length within the circling trees
"Hung obvious to my view, till op'ning wide
"Its lucid orb a more than human form
"Emerging lean'd majeſtick o'er my head,
"And inſtant thunder ſhook the conſcious grove;
"Then melted into air the liquid cloud,
"And all the ſhining viſion ſtood reveal'd.
"A wreath of palm his ample forehead bound,
"And o'er his ſhoulder mantling to his knee
"Flow'd the tranſparent robe, around his waiſt
"Collected with a radiant zone of gold
"Ethereal; there in myſtick ſigns engrav'd
"I read his office high and ſacred name,
"Genius of Humankind. Appall'd I gaz'd
"The godlike preſence, for athwart his brow
"Diſpleaſure temper'd with a mild concern
"Look'd down reluctant on me, and his words
"Like diſtant thunders broke the murm'ring air."
"Vain are thy thoughts, O Child of mortal birth!
"And impotent thy tongue. Is thy ſhort ſpan
"Capacious of this univerſal frame

"Thy wiſdom all-ſufficient? Thou, alas!
"Doſt thou aſpire to judge between the Lord
"Of Nature and his works? to lift thy voice
"Againſt the ſov'ran order he decreed,
"All good and lovely? to blaſpheme the bands
"Of tenderneſs innate and ſocial love
"Holieſt of things! by which the gen'ral orb
"Of being, as by adamantine links,
"Was drawn to perfect union, and ſuſtain'd
"From everlaſting? Haſt thou felt the pangs
"Of ſoft'ning ſorrow, of indignant zeal,
"So grievous to the ſoul as thence to wiſh
"The ties of Nature broken from thy frame,
"That ſo thy ſelfiſh unrelenting heart
"Might ceaſe to mourn its lot, no longer then
"The wretched heir of evils not its own?
"O fair benevolence of gen'rous minds!
"O man by Nature form'd for all mankind!"
"He ſpoke; abaſh'd and ſilent I remain'd,
"As conſcious of my tongue's offence, and aw'd
"Before his preſence, tho' my ſecret ſoul
"Diſdain'd the imputation. On the ground
"I fix'd my eyes, till from his airy couch
"He ſtoop'd ſublime, and touching with his hand
"My dazzling forehead, "Raiſe thy ſight," he cry'd,
"And let thy ſenſe convince thy erring tongue."
"I look'd, and lo! the former ſcene was chang'd;
"For verdant alleys and ſurrounding trees

"A ſolitary proſpect wide and wild
"Ruſh'd on my ſenſes. 'Twas an horrid pile
"Of hills with many a ſhaggy foreſt mix'd
"With many a ſable cliff and glitt'ring ſtream
"Aloft recumbent o'er the hanging ridge
"The brown woods wav'd, while ever-trickling ſprings
"Waſh'd from the naked roots of oak and pine
"The crumbling ſoil, and ſtill at ev'ry fall
"Down the ſteep windings of the channell'd rock
"Remurm'ring ruſh'd the congregated floods
"With hoarſer inundation, till at laſt
"They reach'd a graſſy plain, which from the ſkirts
"Of that high deſert ſpread her verdant lap,
"And drank the guſhing moiſture, where confin'd
"In one ſmooth current o'er the lilied vale
"Clearer than glaſs it flow'd. Autumnal ſpoils
"Luxuriant ſpreading to the rays of morn
"Bluſh'd o'er the cliffs, whoſe half-encircling mound
"As in a ſylvan theatre incloſ'd
"That flow'ry level. On the river's brink
"I ſpy'd a fair pavilion, which diffus'd
"Its floating umbrage 'mid the ſilver ſhade
"Of oſiers. Now the weſtern ſun reveal'd
"Between two parting cliffs his golden orb,
"And pour'd acroſs the ſhadow of the hills
"On rocks and floods a yellow ſtream of light
"That cheer'd the ſolemn ſcene. My liſt'ning pow'rs
"Were aw'd, and ev'ry thought in ſilence hung

"And wond'ring expectation: then the voice
"Of that celestial pow'r the mystick show
"Declaring, thus my deep att.ntion call'd:"
"Inhabitant of earth, to whom is giv'n

V. 304. *Inhabitant of earth*, &c.] The account of the economy of Providence here introduced, as the most proper to calm and satisfy the mind when under the compunction of private evils, seems to have come originally from the Pythagorean school; but of the ancient philosophers Plato has most largely insisted upon it, has established it with all the strength of his capacious understanding, and ennobled it with all the magnificence of his divine imagination. He has one passage so full and clear on this head that I am persuaded the reader will be pleased to see it here tho' somewhat long. Addressing himself to such as are not satisfied concerning divine Providence; "The being who presides over the whole," says he, "has disposed and complicated all things for the happiness and virtue of the whole, every part of which, according to the extent of its influence, does and suffers what is fit and proper. "One of these parts is your's, O unhappy man! which tho' in "itself most inconsiderable and minute, yet being connected "with the universe ever seeks to co-operate with that supreme "order. You in the mean-time are ignorant of the very end "for which all particular natures are brought into existence, "that the all-comprehending nature of the whole may be "perfect and happy; existing as it does not for your sake, "but the cause and reason of your existence, which, as in the "symmetry of every artificial work, must of nec..ity concur "with the general design of the artist, and be subservient to "the whole, of which it is a part. Your complaint therefore "is ignorant and groundless, since according to the various "energy of creation and the common laws of Nature there is "a constant provision of that which is best at the same time "for you and for the whole.—For the governing Int lligence "clearly beholding all the actions of animated and self-mo-"ving creatures, and that mixture of good and evil which di-

"The gracious ways of providence to learn,
"Receive my fayings with a ftedfaft ear.——
"Know then the Sovran fpirit of the world,
"Tho' felf-collected from eternal time
"Within his own deep effence he beheld
"The bounds of true felicity complete,
"Yet by immenfe benignity inclin'd
"To fpread around him that primeval joy
"Which fill'd himfelf, he rais'd his plaftick arm
"And founded thro' the hollow depth of fpace

"verfifies them, confidered firft of all by what difpofition "of things, and by what fituation of each individual in the "general fyftem, vice might be depreffed and fubdued, and "virtue made fecure of victory and happinefs, with the grea- "teft facility, and in the higheft degree poffible: in this "manner he ordered through the entire circle of being the "internal conftitution of every mind, where fhould be its "ftation in the univerfal fabrick, and through what variety "of circumftances it fhould proceed in the whole tenour of its "exiftence." He goes on in his fublime manner to affert a future ftate of retribution, "as well for thofe who by the ex- "ercife of good dipofitions being harmonized and affimilated "into the divine virtue, are confequently removed to a place "of unblemifhed fanctity and happinefs, as of thofe who by "the moft flagitious arts have rifen from contemptible begin- "nings to the greateft affluence and power, and whom you "therefore look upon as unanfwerable inftances of negligence "in the Gods, becaufe you are ignorant of the purpofes to "which they are fubfervient, and in what manner they con- "tribute to that fupreme intention of good to the whole." *Plato de Leg.* x. 16.

This theory has been delivered of late efpecially abroad, in a mann r which fubverts the freedom of human actions; whereas Plato appears very careful to preferve it, and has been in that refpect imitated by the beft of his followers.

" The ſtrong creative mandate ; ſtraight aroſe
" Theſe heav'nly orbs, the glad abodes of life
" Effuſive kindled by his breath divine
" Thro' endleſs forms of being : each inhal'd
" From him its portion of the vital flame,
" In meaſure ſuch that from the wide complex
" Of co-exiſtent orders one might riſe,
" One order, all-involving and entire.
" He too beholding in the ſacred light
" Of his eſſential reaſon all the ſhapes
" Of ſwift contingence, all ſucceſſive ties
" Of action propagated thro' the ſum
" Of poſſible exiſtence, he at once
" Down the long ſeries of eventful time
" So fix'd the dates of being, ſo diſpos'd
" To ev'ry living ſoul of ev'ry kind
" The field of motion and the hour of reſt,
" That all conſpir'd to his ſupreme deſign,
" To univerſal good ; with full accord
" Anſw'ring the mighty model he had choſen,
" The beſt and faireſt of unnumber'd worlds

V. 321-----*one might riſe* ----*One order*, &c.] See *The Meditations of Antonius*, and *The Characteriſticks*, *paſſim.*

V. 335. *The beſt and faireſt*, &c.] This opinion is ſo old that Timæus Locrus calls the Supreme Being, " The Artificer of that which is beſt," and repreſents him as reſolving in the beginning to produce the moſt excellent work, and as copying the world moſt exactly from his own intelligible and eſſential idea; " ſo that it yet remains as it was at " firſt, perfect in beauty, and will never ſtand in need of any

"That lay from everlafting in the ftore
"Of his divine conceptions. Nor content
"By one exertion of creative pow'r
"His goodnefs to reveal, thro' ev'ry age,
"Thro' ev'ry moment up the track of time,
"His parent hand with ever-new increafe
"Of happinefs and virtue has adorn'd
"The vaft harmonious frame: his parent hand
"From the mute fhell-fifh gafping on the fhore
"To men, to angels, to celeftial minds,
"For ever leads the generations on
"To higher fcenes of being, while fupply'd
"From day to day with his enliv'ning breath
"Inferior orders in fucceffion rife
"To fill the void below. As flame afcends,
"As bodies to their proper centre move,
"As the pois'd ocean to the attracting moon
"Obedient fwells, and ev'ry headlong ftream
"Devolves its winding waters to the main,
"So all things which have life afpire to God,
"The fun of being, boundlefs, unimpair'd,

"correction or improvement." There can be no room for a caution here to underftand the expreffions not of any particular circumftances of human life feparately confidered, but of the fum or univerfal fyftem of life and being. See alfo *The Vifion* at the end of *The Theodicee of Leibnitz.*

V. 350. *As flame afcends,* &c.] This opinion, tho' not held by Plato nor any of the Ancients, is yet a very natural confequence of his principles: but the difquifition is too complex and extenfive to be entered upon here.

" Centre of ſouls ! Nor does the faithful voice
" Of Nature ceaſe to prompt their eager ſteps
" Aright, nor is the care of Heav'n withheld
" From granting to the taſk proportion'd aid,
" That in their ſtations all may perſevere
" To climb th' aſcent of being, and approach
" For ever nearer to the life divine.
" That rocky pile thou ſeeſt, that verdant lawn,
" Freſh water'd from the mountains. Let the ſcene
" Paint in thy fancy the primeval ſeat
" Of man, and where the Will Supreme ordain'd
" His manſion, that pavilion fair diffus'd
" Along the ſhady brink, in this receſs
" To wear th' appointed ſeaſon of his youth,
" Till riper hours ſhould open to his toil
" The high communion of ſuperior minds,
" Of conſecrated heroes and of gods.
" Nor did the Sire Omnipotent forget
" His tender bloom to cheriſh, nor withheld
" Celeſtial footſteps from his green abode :
" Oft' from the radiant honours of his throne
" He ſent whom moſt he lov'd, the Sovran Fair,
" The effluence of his glory, whom he plac'd
" Before his eyes for ever to behold,
" The goddeſs from whoſe inſpiration flows
" The toil of patriots, the delight of friends,
" Without whoſe work divine in heav'n or earth
" Nought lovely, nought propitious, comes to paſs,

" Nor hope, nor praiſe, nor honour. Her the Sire
" Gave it in charge to rear the blooming mind,
" The folded pow'rs to open, to direct
" The growth luxuriant of his young deſires,
" And from the laws of this majeſtick world
" To teach him what was good. As thus the nymph
" Her daily care attended, by her ſide,
" With conſtant ſteps her gay companion ſtay'd,
" The fair Euphroſyne! the gentle queen
" Of ſmiles, and graceful gladneſs, and delights
" That cheer alike the hearts of mortal men
" And pow'rs immortal. See the ſhining Pair!
" Behold where from his dwelling now diſclos'd
" They quit their youthful charge and ſeek the ſkies."
" I look'd, and on the flow'ry turf there ſtood
" Beween two radiant forms a ſmiling youth
" Whoſe tender cheeks diſplay'd the vernal flow'r
" Of beauty, ſweeteſt innocence illum'd
" His baſhful eyes, and on his poliſh'd brow
" Sat young Simplicity. With fond regard
" He view'd th' aſſociates as their ſteps they mov'd;
" The younger chief his ardent eyes detain'd,
" With mild regret invoking her return:
" Bright as the ſtar of ev'ning ſhe appear'd
" Amid the duſky ſcene: eternal youth
" O'er all her form its glowing honours breath'd,
" And ſmiles external from her candid eyes
" Flow'd like the dewy luſtre of the morn

"Effuſive trembling on the placid waves:
"The ſpring of heav'n had ſhed its bluſhing ſpoils
"To bind her ſable treſſes; full diffus'd
"Her yellow mantle floated in the breeze,
"And in her hand ſhe wav'd a living branch
"Rich with immortal fruits of pow'r to calm
"The wrathful heart, and from the bright'ning eyes
"To chaſe the cloud of ſadneſs. More ſublime
"The heav'nly partner mov'd: the prime of age
"Compos'd her ſteps: the preſence of a god,
"High on the circle of her brow enthron'd,
"From each majeſtick motion darted awe,
"Devoted awe! till cheriſh'd by her looks,
"Benevolent and meek, confiding love
"To filial rapture ſoften'd all the ſoul.
"Free in her graceful hand ſhe pois'd the ſword
"Of chaſte dominion: an heroick crown
"Diſplay'd the old ſimplicity of pomp
"Around her honour'd head: a matron's robe
"White as the ſunſhine ſtreams thro' vernal clouds
"Her ſtately form inveſted. Hand in hand
"Th' immortal pair forſook th' enamel'd green,
"Aſcending ſlowly: rays of limpid light
"Gleam'd round their path; celeſtial ſounds were [heard,
"And thro' the fragrant air ethereal dews
"Diſtill'd around them, till at once the clouds
"Diſparting wide in midway ſky withdrew
"Their airy veil, and left a bright expanſe

" Of empyrean flame, where ſpent and drown'd
" Afflicted viſion plung'd in vain to ſcan
" What object it involv'd. My feeble eyes
" Endur'd not. Bending down to earth I ſtood
" With dumb attention. Soon a female voice,
" As wat'ry murmurs ſweet or warbling ſhades,
" With ſacred invocation thus began :"
" Father of gods and mortals! whoſe right arm
" With reins eternal guides the moving heav'ns
" Bend thy propitious ear: behold well pleas'd
" I ſeek to finiſh thy divine decree.
" With frequent ſteps I viſit yonder ſeat
" Of man, thy offspring, from the tender ſeeds
" Of juſtice and of wiſdom to evolve
" The latent honours of his gen'rous frame,
" Till thy conducting hand ſhall raiſe his lot
" From earth's dim ſcene to theſe ethereal walks,
" The temple of thy glory. But not me,
" Not my directing voice, he oft' requires,
" Or hears delighted : this enchanting maid,
" Th' aſſociate thou haſt giv'n me, her alone
" He loves, O Father! abſent her he craves;
" And but for her glad preſence ever join'd
" Rejoices not in mine ; that all my hopes
" This thy benignant purpoſe to fulfil
" I deem uncertain, and my daily cares
" Unfruitful all and vain, unleſs by thee
" Still farther aided in the work divine."

" She ceas'd ; a voice more awful thus reply'd :"
" O thou ! in whom for ever ! I delight,
" Fairer than all th' inhabitants of heav'n,
" Beſt image of thy Author ! far from thee
" Be diſappointment, or diſtaſte, or blame,
" Who ſoon or late ſhalt ev'ry work fulfil,
" And no reſiſtance find. If man refuſe
" To hearken to thy dictates, or allur'd
" By meaner joys to any other pow'r
" Transfer the honours due to thee alone,
" That joy which he purſues he ne'er ſhall taſte,
" That pow'r in whom delighteth ne'er behold
" Go then once more, and happy be thy toil ;
" Go then, but let not this thy ſmiling friend
" Partake thy footſteps. In her ſtead, behold
" With thee the ſon of Nemeſis I ſend,
" The fiend abhorr'd ! whoſe vengeance takes account
" Of ſacred Order's violated laws.
" See where he calls thee, burning to be gone,
" Fierce to exhauſt the tempeſt of his wrath
" On yon' devoted head. But thou, my Child !
" Control his cruel phrenzy and protect
" Thy tender charge, that when deſpair ſhall graſp
" His agonizing boſom he may learn,
" Then he may learn, to love the gracious hand
" Alone ſufficient in the hour of ill
" To ſave his feeble ſpirit ; then confeſs
" Thy genuine honours, O excelling Fair !

" When all the plagues that wait the deadly will
" Of this avenging demon, all the ſtorms
" Of night infernal, ſerve but to diſplay
" The energy of thy ſuperior charms
" With mildeſt awe triumphant o'er his rage,
" And ſhining clearer in the horrid gloom."
" Here ceas'd that awful voice, and ſoon I felt
" The cloudy curtain of refreſhing eve
" Was clos'd once more, from that immortal fire
" Shelt'ring my eyelids. Looking up I view'd
" A vaſt gigantick ſpectre ſtriding on
" Thro' murm'ring thunders and a waſte of clouds
" With dreadful action. Black as night his brow
" Reſentleſs frowns involv'd: his ſavage limbs
" With ſharp impatience violent he writh'd
" As thro' convulſive anguiſh; and his hand,
" Arm'd with a ſcorpion laſh, full oft' he rais'd
" In madneſs to his boſom; while his eyes
" Rain'd bitter tears, and bellowing loud he ſhook
" The void with horrour. Silent by his ſide
" The virgin came; no diſcompoſure ſtirr'd
" Her features; from the glooms which hung around
" No ſtain of darkneſs mingled with the beam
" Of her divine effulgence. Now they ſtoop
" Upon the river bank, and now to hail
" His wonted gueſts with eager ſteps advanc'd
" The unſuſpecting inmate of the ſhade.
" As when a famiſh'd wolf that all night long

" Had rang'd the Alpine ſnows by chance at morn
" Sees from a cliff incumbent o'er the ſmoke
" Of ſome lone village a neglected kid
" That ſtrays along the wild for herb or ſpring,
" Down from the winding ridge he ſweeps amain,
" And thinks he tears him ; ſo with tenfold rage
" The monſter ſprung remorſeleſs on his prey.
" Amaz'd the ſtripling ſtood ; with panting breaſt
" Feebly he pour'd the lamentable wail
" Of helpleſs conſternation, ſtruck at once
" And rooted to the ground. The queen beheld
" His terrour, and with looks of tend'reſt care
" Advanc'd to ſave him. Soon the tyrant felt
" Her awful pow'r : his keen tempeſt'ous arm
" Hung nerveleſs, nor deſcended where his rage
" Had aim'd the deadly blow, then dumb retir'd
" With ſullen rancour. Lo ! the ſovran maid
" Folds with a mother's arms the fainting boy
" Till life rekindles in his roſy cheek, [tongue.
" Then graſps his hands and cheers him with her
" O wake thee, rouſe thy ſpirit ! ſhall the ſpite
" Of yon' tormentor thus appal thy heart
" While I thy friend and guardian am at hand
" To reſcue and to heal ? O let thy ſoul
" Remember what the will of Heav'n ordains
" Is ever good for all, and if for all
" Then good for thee. Nor only by the warmth
" And ſoothing ſunſhine of delightful things

“ Do minds grow up and flouriſh. Oft' miſled
“ By that bland light the young unpractis'd views
“ Of reaſon wander thro' a fatal road,
“ Far from their native aim, as if to lie
“ Inglorious in the fragrant ſhade, and wait
“ The ſoft acceſs of ever-circling joys,
“ Were all the end of being. Aſk thyſelf,
“ This pleaſing errour did it never lull
“ Thy wiſhes? has thy conſtant heart refus'd
“ The ſilken fetters of delicious eaſe?
“ Or when divine Euphroſyne appear'd
“ Within this dwelling, did not thy deſires
“ Hang far below the meaſure of thy fate
“ Which I reveal'd before thee? and thy eyes
“ Impatient of my counſels turn away
“ To drink the ſoft effuſion of her ſmiles?
“ Know then for this the Everlaſting Sire
“ Deprives thee of her preſence, and inſtead,
“ O wiſe and ſtill benevolent! ordains
“ This horrid viſage hither to purſue
“ My ſteps, that ſo thy nature may diſcern
“ Its real good, and what alone can ſave
“ Thy feeble ſpirit in this hour of ill
“ From folly and deſpair. O yet belov'd!
“ Let not this headlong terrour quite o'erwhelm
“ Thy ſcatter'd pow'rs, nor fatal deem the rage
“ Of this tormentor, nor his proud aſſault,
“ While I am here to vindicate thy toil,

" Above the gen'rous queſtion of thy arm.
" Brave by thy fears, and in thy weakneſs ſtrong,
" This hour he triumphs; but confront his might
" And dare him to the combat, then, with eaſe
" Diſarm'd and quell'd, his fierceneſs he reſigns
" To bondage and to ſcorn; while thus inur'd
" By watchful danger, by unceaſing toil,
" Th' immortal mind ſuperior to his fate,
" Amid the outrage of external things
" Firm as the ſolid baſe of this great world,
" Reſts on his own foundation. Blow ye Winds!
" Ye Waves! ye Thunders! roll your tempeſt on,
" Shake ye old Pillars of the marble ſky!
" Till all its orbs and all its worlds of fire
" Be looſen'd from their ſeats; yet ſtill ſerene
" Th' unconquer'd mind looks down upon the wreck,
" And ever ſtronger as the ſtorms advance
" Firm thro' the cloſing ruin holds his way
" Where Nature calls him, to the deſtin'd goal.'
" So ſpake the goddeſs, while thro' all her frame
" Celeſtial raptures flow'd, in ev'ry word,
" In ev'ry motion, kindling warmth divine
" To ſeize who liſten'd. Vehement and ſwift
" As lightning fires the aromatick ſhade
" In Ethiopian fields the ſtripling felt
" Her inſpiration catch his fer[illegible]d ſoul,
" And ſtarting from his languor thus exclaim'd:"
" Then let the trial come! and witneſs thou

"Perplex'd and giddy, till the radiant pow'r
"Who bad the viſionary landſcape riſe,
"As up to him I turn'd with gentleſt looks,
"Preventing my inquiry thus began:"
"There let thy ſoul acknowledge its complaint
"How blind, how impious! there behold the ways
"Of Heav'n's eternal deſtiny to man
"For ever juſt, benevolent, and wiſe,
"That Virtue's awful ſteps howe'er purſu'd
"By vexing Fortune and intruſive Pain,
"Should never be divided from her chaſte,
"Her fair, attendant Pleaſure. Need I urge
"Thy tardy thought thro' all the various round
"Of this exiſtence, that thy ſoft'ning ſoul
"At length may learn what energy the hand
"Of Virtue mingles in the bitter tide
"Of paſſion ſwelling with diſtreſs and pain,
"To mitigate the ſharp with gracious drops
"Of cordial pleaſure? Aſk the faithful youth
"Why the cold urn of her whom long he lov'd
"So often fills his arms, ſo often draws
"His lonely footſteps at the ſilent hour
"To pay the mournful tribute of his tears?
"O! he will tell thee that the wealth of worlds
"Should ne'er ſeduce his boſom to forego
"That ſacred hour when, ſtealing from the noiſe
"Of care and envy, ſweet remembrance ſooths
"With Virtue's kindeſt looks his aking breaſt,

"And turns his tears to rapture.—Aſk the crowd
"Which flies impatient from the village walk
"To climb the neighb'ring cliffs when far below
"The cruel winds have hurl'd upon the coaſt
"Some helpleſs bark, while ſacred Pity melts
"The gen'ral eye, or Terrour's icy hand
"Smites their diſtorted limbs and horrent hair,
"While ev'ry mother cloſer to her breaſt
"Catches her child, and pointing where the waves
"Foam thro' the ſhatter'd veſſel, ſhrieks aloud
"As one poor wretch that ſpreads his piteous arms
"For ſuccour ſwallow'd by the roaring ſurge,
"As now another daſh'd againſt the rock
"Drops lifeleſs down! O! deemſt thou indeed
"No kind endearment here by Nature giv'n
"To mutual terrour and Compaſſion's tears?
"No ſweetly melting ſoftneſs which attracts,
"O'er all that edge of pain, the ſocial pow'rs
"To this their proper action and their end?
"Aſk thy own heart when at the midnight hour
"Slow thro' that ſtudious gloom thy pauſing eye,
"Led by the glimm'ring taper, moves around
"The ſacred volumes of the dead, the ſongs
"Of Grecian bards, and records writ by Fame
"For Grecian heroes, where the preſent pow'r
"Of heav'n and earth ſurveys th' immortal page,
"Ev'n as a father bleſſing while he reads
"The praiſes of his ſon, if then thy ſoul,

"If terrour be upon me, If I ſhrink
"To meet the ſtorm, or faulter in my ſtrength
"When hardeſt it beſets me. Do not think
"That I am fearful and infirm of ſoul,
"As late thy eyes beheld, for thou haſt chang'd
"My nature; thy commanding voice has wak'd
"My languid pow'rs to bear me boldly on
"Where'er the will divine my path ordains
"Thro' toil or peril; only do not thou
"Forſake me: O! be thou for ever near,
"That I may liſten to thy ſacred voice,
"And guide by thy decrees my conſtant feet.
"But ſay, for ever are my eyes bereft?
"Say, ſhall the fair Euphroſyne not once
"Appear again to charm me? Thou in heav'n,
"O thou Eternal Arbiter of things!
"Be thy great bidding done; for who am I
"To queſtion thy appointment? Let the frowns
"Of this avenger ev'ry morn o'ercaſt
"The cheerful dawn, and ev'ry evening damp
"With double night my dwelling; I will learn
"To hail them both, and unrepining bear
"His hateful preſence; but permit my tongue
"One glad requeſt, and if my deeds may find
"Thy awful eye propitious, O reſtore
"The roſy-featur'd maid again to cheer
"This lonely ſeat, and bleſs me with her ſmiles!"
"He ſpoke; when inſtant thro' the ſable glooms

" With which that furvious preſence had involv'd
" The ambient air a flood of radiance came
" Swift as the lightning flaſh; the melting clouds
" Flew diverſe, and amid the blue ſerene
" Euphroſyne appear'd. With ſprightly ſtep
" The nymph alighted on th' irriguous lawn,
" And to her wond'ring audience thus began :"
" Lo! I am here to anſwer to your vows,
" And be the meeting fortunate! I come
" With joyful tidings; we ſhall part no more.—
" Hark how the gentle Echo from her cell
" Talks thro' the cliffs, and murm'ring o'er the ſtream
" Repeats the accents, We ſhall part no more!
" O my delightful Friends! well pleas'd on high
" The Father has beheld you while the might
" Of that ſtern foe with bitter trial prov'd
" Your equal doings; then for ever ſpake
" The high decree, that thou, celeſtial Maid!
" Howe'er that griſly phantom on thy ſteps
" May ſometimes dare intrude, yet never more
" Shalt thou deſcending to th' abode of man
" Alone endure the rancour of his arm,
" Or leave thy lov'd Euphroſyne behind."
" She ended, and the whole romantick ſcene
" Immediate vaniſh'd; rocks, and woods, and rills,
" The mantling tent, and each myſterious form
" Flew like the pictures of a morning dream
" When ſunſhine fills the bed. A while I ſtood

“ Spurning the yoke of theſe inglorious days,
“ Mix in their deeds and kindle with their flame?
“ Say, when the proſpect blackens on thy view,
“ When rooted from the baſe heroick ſtates
“ Mourn in the duſt, and tremble at the frown
“ Of curſt Ambition; when the pious band
“ Of youths who fought for freedom, and their ſires,
“ Lie ſide by ſide in gore; when ruffian Pride
“ Uſurps the throne of Juſtice, turns the pomp
“ Of publick pow'r, the majeſty of rule,
“ The ſword, the laurel, and the purple robe,
“ To ſlaviſh empty pageants, to adorn
“ A tyrant's walk, and glitter in the eyes
“ Of ſuch as bow the knee; when honour'd urns
“ Of patriots and of chiefs, the awful buſt
“ And ſtory'd arch, to glut the coward-rage
“ Of regal envy ſtrew the publick way
“ With hallow'd ruins; when the Muſes' haunt,
“ The marble Porch where Wiſdom wont to talk
“ With Socrates or Tully, hears no more
“ Save the hoarſe jargon of contentious monks,
“ Or female Superſtition's midnight pray'r;
“ When ruthleſs Rapine from the hand of Time
“ Tears the deſtroying ſithe, with ſurer blow
“ To ſweep the works of glory from the baſe,
“ Till Deſolation o'er the graſs-grown ſtreet
“ Expands his raven wings, and up the wall,
“ Where ſenates once the price of monarchs doom'd

"Hiſſes the gliding ſnake thro' hoary weeds
"That claſp the mould'ring column: thus defac'd,
"Thus widely mournful when the proſpect thrills
"Thy beating boſom, when the patriot's tear
"Starts from thine eye, and thy extended arm
"In fancy hurls the thunderbolt of Jove
"To fire the impious wreath on Philip's brow,
"Or daſh Octavius from the trophy'd car,
"Say, does thy ſecret ſoul repine to taſte
"The big diſtreſs? or wouldſt thou then exchange
"Thoſe heart-ennobling ſorrows for the lot
"Of him who ſits amid the gaudy herd
"Of mute Barbarians bending to his nod,
"And bears aloft his gold-inveſted front,
"And ſays within himſelf, "I am a king,
"And wherefore ſhould the clam'rous voice of Wo
"Intrude upon mine ear?"—The baleful dregs
"Of theſe late ages, this inglorious draught
"Of ſervitude and folly, have not yet,
"Bleſt be th' Eternal Ruler of the world!
"Defil'd to ſuch a depth of ſordid ſhame
"The native honours of the human ſoul,
"Nor ſo effac'd the image of its Sire."

V. 755. *Philip.*] The Macedonian.

THE

PLEASURES OF IMAGINATION.

BOOK III.

THE ARGUMENT.

PLEASURE in obferving the tempers and manners of men, even where vicious or abfurd. The origin of vice, from falfe reprefentations of the fancy producing falfe opinions concerning good and evil. Inquiry into ridicule. The general fources of ridicule in the minds and characters of men enumerated. Final caufe of the fenfe of ridicule. The refemblance of certain afpects of inanimate things to the fenfations and properties of the mind. The operations of the mind in the production of the works of Imagination defcribed. The fecondary Pleafure from imitation. The benevolent order of the world illuftrated in the arbitrary connexion of thefe Pleafures with the objects which excite them. The nature and conduct of tafte. Concluding with an account of the natural and moral advantages refulting from a fenfible and well formed Imagination.

WHAT wonder therefore fince th' endearing ties
Of paffion link the univerfal kind
Of man fo clofe, what wonder if to fearch
This common nature thro' the various change
Of fex, and age, and fortune, and the frame
Of each peculiar, draw the bufy mind
With unrefifted charms? The fpacious weft
And all the teeming regions of the fouth
Hold not a quarry to the curious flight
Of knowledge half fo tempting or fo fair
As man to man; nor only where the fmiles
Of love invite, nor only where th' applaufe
Of cordial honour turns th' attentive eye
On Virtue's graceful deeds; for fince the courfe

Of things external acts in diff'rent ways
On human apprehenſions, as the hand
Of Nature temper'd to a diff'rent frame
Peculiar minds, ſo haply where the pow'rs
Of fancy neither leſſon nor enlarge

V. 18. ---- *where the pow'rs---Of fancy*, &c.] The influence of the Imagination on the conduct of life is one of the moſt important points in moral philoſophy. It were eaſy by an induction of facts to prove that the Imagination directs almoſt all the paſſions, and mixes with almoſt every circumſtance of action or pleaſure. Let any man, even of the coldeſt head and ſobereſt induſtry, analyze the idea of what he calls his intereſt, he will find that it conſiſts chiefly of certain degrees of decency, beauty, and order, variouſly combined into one ſyſtem, the idol which he ſeeks to enjoy by labour, hazard, and ſelfdenial. It is on this account of the laſt conſequence to regulate theſe images by the ſtandard of Nature and the general good, otherwiſe the Imagination, by heightening ſome objects beyond their real excellence and beauty, or by repreſenting others in a more odious or terrible ſhape than they deſerve, may of courſe engage us in purſuits utterly inconſiſtent with the moral order of things.

If it be objected that this account of things ſuppoſes the paſſions to be merely accidental, whereas there appears in ſome a natural and hereditary diſpoſition to certain paſſions, prior to all circumſtances of education or fortune, it may be anſwered, that though no man is born ambitious or a miſer, yet he may inherit from his parents a peculiar temper or complexion of mind which ſhall render his Imagination more liable to be ſtruck with ſome particular objects, conſequently diſpoſe him to form opinions of good and ill, and entertain paſſions of a particular turn. Some men, for inſtance, by the original frame of their minds are more delighted with the vaſt and magnificent, others on the contrary, with the elegant and gentle aſpects of Nature; and it is very remarkable that the

The images of things, but paint in all
Their genuine hues the features which they wore
In Nature, there opinion will be true
And action right; for Action treads the path
In which Opini[illegible]n says he follows good
Or flies from evil; and Opinion gives
Report of good or evil as the scene
Was drawn by Fancy, lovely or deform'd:
Thus her report can never there be true

disposition of the moral powers is always similar to this of the Imagination; that those who are most inclined to admire prodigious and sublime objects in the physical world are also most inclined to applaud examples of fortitude and heroick virtue in the moral; while those who are charmed rather with the delicacy and sweetness of colours, and forms, and sounds, never fail, in like manner, to yield the preference to the softer scenes of virtue and the sympathies of a domestick life. And this is sufficient to account for the objection.

Among the ancient philosophers though we have several hints concerning this influence of the Imagination upon morals among the remains of the Socratick school, yet the Stoicks were the first who paid it a due attention. Zeno their founder thought in impossible to preserve any tolerable regularity in life without frequently inspecting those pictures or appearances of things which the Imagination offers to the mind. *Diog. Laert.* l. vii. The Meditations of M. Aurelius, and The Discourses of Epictetus, are full of the same sentiment, insomuch that the latter makes the "right management of the fancies," the only thing for which we are accountable to Providence, and without which a man is no other than stupid or frantick. *Arrian*, l. i. c. 12. and l. ii. c. 22. See also *The Characteristick.* vol. I. from p. 313 to 321, where this stoical doctrine is embellished with all the elegance and graces of Plato.

Where Fancy cheats the intellectual eye
With glaring colours and distorted lines.
Is there a man who at the found of death
Sees ghastly shapes of terrour conjur'd up
And black before him, nought but d athbed groans
And fearful pray'rs, and plunging from the brink
Of light and being down the gloomy air
An unknown depth? Alas! in such a mind
If no bright forms of excellence attend
The image of his country, nor the pomp
Of sacred senates, nor the guardian voice
Of Justice on her throne, nor aught that wakes
The conscious bosom with a patriot's flame,
Will not Opinion tell him that to die
Or stand the hazard is a greater ill
Than to betray his country? and in act
Will he not chuse to be a wretch and live?
Here vice begins then. From th' enchanting cup
Which Fancy holds to all th' unwary thirst
Of youth oft' swallows a Circean draught
That sheds a baleful tincture o'er the eye
Of Reason, till no longer he discerns,
And only guides to err; then revel forth
A furious band that spurn him from the throne,
And all is uproar. Thus Ambition grasps
The empire of the soul; thus pale Revenge
Unsheaths her murd'rous dagger; and the hands
Of Lust and Rapine with unholy arts

Watch to o'erturn the barrier of the laws
That keeps them from their prey: thus all the plagues
The wicked bear, or o'er the trembling scene
The Tragick Muse discloses, under shapes
Of honour, safety, pleasure, ease, or pomp,
Stole first into the mind. Yet not by all
Those lying forms which Fancy in the brain
Engenders are the kindling passions driv'n
To guilty deeds, nor Reason bound in chains,
That Vice alone may lord it: oft' adorn'd
With solemn pageants Folly mounts the throne,
And plays her idiot anticks like a queen.
A thousand garbs she wears, a thousand ways
She wheels her giddy empire.—Lo! thus far
With bold adventure to the Mantuan lyre
I sing of Nature's charms, and touch well pleas'd
A stricter note: now haply must my song
Unbend her serious measure, and reveal
In lighter strains how Folly's aukward arts

V. 75. —*how Folly's aukward arts*, &c.] Notwithstanding the general influence of ridicule on private and civil life, as well as on learning and the sciences, it has been almost constantly neglected or misrepresented, by divines especially. The manner of treating these subjects in the science of human nature should be precisely the same as in natural philosophy, from particular facts to investigate the stated order in which they appear, and then apply the general law thus discovered to the explication of other appearances and the improvement of useful arts.

Excite impetuous Laughter's gay rebuke,
The ſportive province of the Comick Muſe.
See in what crowds the uncouth forms advance!
Each would outſtrip the other, each prevent
Our careful ſearch, and offer to your gaze
Unaſk'd his motley features. Wait a while
My curious Friends! and let us firſt arrange
In proper order your promiſc'ous throng.
Behold the foremoſt band, of ſlender thought
And eaſy faith, whom flatt'ring Fancy ſooths
With lying ſpectres, in themſelves to view
Illuſtrious forms of excellence and good,
That ſcorn the manſion. With exulting hearts
They ſpread their ſpurious treaſures to the ſun,
And bid the world admire! but chief the glance
Of wiſhful Envy draws their joy-bright eyes,
And lifts with ſelf-applauſe each lordly brow.
In number boundleſs as the bloom of ſpring
Behold their glaring idols, empty ſhades
By Fancy gilded o'er, and then ſet up
For adoration: ſome in Learning's garb,
With formal band, and ſable-cinctur'd gown,
And rags of mouldy volumes; ſome, elate
With martial ſplendour, ſteely pikes and ſwords
Of coſtly frame, and gay Phœnician robes

V. 84. *Behold the foremaſt band*, &c.] The firſt and moſt general ſource of ridicule in the characters of men is vanity or ſelf-applauſe for ſome deſirable quality or poſſeſſion which evidently does not belong to thoſe who aſſume it,

Inwrought with flowry gold, aſſume the port
Of ſtately Valour; liſt'ning by his ſide
There ſtands a female form; to her with looks
Of earneſt import, pregnant with amaze,
He talks of deadly deeds, of breaches, ſtorms,
And ſulph'rous mines, and ambuſh! then at once
Breaks off, and ſmiles to ſee her look ſo pale,
And aſks ſome wond'ring queſtion of her fears!
Others of graver mien; behold adorn'd
With holy enſigns how ſublime they move,
And bending oft' their ſanctimonious eyes
Take homage of the ſimple-minded throng;
Ambaſſadors of Heav'n! nor much unlike
Is he whoſe viſage in the lazy miſt
That mantles ev'ry feature hides a brood
Of politick conceits, of whiſpers, nods,
And hints deep omen'd with unwieldy ſchemes,
And dark portents of ſtate! Ten thouſand more
Prodigious habits and tumult'ous tongues
Pour dauntleſs in and ſwell the boaſtful band.
Then comes the ſecond order, all who ſeek
The debt of praiſe, where watchful Unbelief
Darts thro' the thin pretence her ſquinting eye
On ſome retir'd appearance which belies

V. 121. *Then comes the ſecond order*, &c.] Ridicule from the ſame variety, where though the poſſeſſion be real yet no merit can ariſe from it, becauſe of ſome particular circumſtances which, though obvious to the ſpectator, are yet overlooked by the ridiculous character.

The boasted virtue, or annuls th' applause
That Justice else would pay. Here side by side
I see two leaders of the solemn train
Approaching, one a female old and grey,
With eyes demure and wrinkle-furrow'd brow,
Pale as the cheeks of Death; yet still she stuns
The sick'ning audience with a nauseous tale:
How many youths her myrtle-chains have worn,
How many virgins at her triumphs pin'd!
Yet how resolv'd she guards her cautious heart!
Such is her terrour at the risks of love
And man's seducing tongue! the other seems
A bearded sage, ungentle in his mien,
And sordid all his habit; peevish Want
Grins at his heels, while down the gazing throng
He stalks, resounding in magnifick praise
The vanity of riches, the contempt
Of pomp and pow'r. Be prudent in your zeal
Ye grave Associates! let the silent grace
Of her who blushes at the fond regard
Her charms inspire more eloquent unfold
The praise of spotless honour: let the man
Whose eye regards not his illustrious pomp
And ample store but as indulgent streams
To cheer the barren soil and spread the fruits
Of joy, let him by juster measures fix
The price of riches and the end of pow'r.

Another tribe ſucceeds; deluded long
By Fancy's dazzling opticks theſe behold
The images of ſome peculiar things
With brighter hues reſplendent, and portray'd
With features nobler far than e'er adorn'd
Their genuine objects: hence the fever'd heart
Pants with delirious hope for tinſel charms,
Hence oft' obtruſive on the eye of Scorn
Untimely Zeal her witleſs pride betrays,
And ſerious Manhood from the tow'ring aim
Of Wiſdom ſtoops to emulate the boaſt
Of childiſh Toil. Behold yon' myſtick form
Bedeck'd with feathers, inſects, weeds, and ſhells!
Not with intenſer view the Samian ſage
Bent his fixt eye on heav'n's intenſer fires,
When firſt the order of that radiant ſcene
Swell'd his exulting thought, than this ſurveys
A muckworm's entrails or a ſpider's fang.
Next him a youth with flow'rs and myrtles crown'd
Attends that virgin form, and bluſhing kneels,
With fondeſt geſture and a ſuppliant's tongue,
To win her coy regard. Adieu for him
The dull engagements of the buſtling world!
Adieu the ſick impertinence of praiſe,
And hope and action! for with her alone

V. 152 *Another tribe ſucceeds*, &c.] Ridicule from a notion of excellence in particular objects diſproportioned to their intrinſick value, and inconſiſtent with the order of Nature.

By ſtreams and ſhades to ſteal theſe ſighing hours
Is all he aſks, and all that Fate can give!
Thee too, facetious Momion! wand'ring here,
Thee, dreaded Cenſor! oft' I have beheld
Bewilder'd unawares: alas! too long
Fluſh'd with thy comick triumphs and the ſpoils
Of ſly Deriſion! till on ev'ry ſide
Hurling thy random bolts offended Truth
Aſſign'd thee here thy ſtation with the ſlaves
Of Folly. Thy once formidable name
Shall grace her humble records, and be heard
In ſcoffs and mockry bandy'd from the lips
Of all the vengeful brotherhood around,
So oft' the patient victims of thy ſcorn.
   But now ye Gay! to whom indulgent Fate
Of all the Muſes' empire hath aſſign'd
The fields of folly, hither each advance
Your ſickles; here the teeming ſoil affords
Its richeſt growth. A fav'rite brood appears,
In whom the demon with a mother's joy
Views all her charms reflected, all her cares
At full repaid. Ye moſt illuſtr'ous Band!
Who, ſcorning Reaſon's tame pedantick rules
And Order's vulgar bondage, never meant
For ſouls ſublime as your's, with gen'rous zeal

V. 191. *But now ye Gay!* &c.] Ridicule from a notion of excellence, when the object is abſolutely odious or contemptible. This is the higheſt degree of the ridiculous, as in the affectation of diſeaſes or vices.

Pay Vice the rev'rence Virtue long usurp'd,
And yield Deformity the fond applause
Which Beauty wont to claim, forgive my song,
That for the blushing diffidence of youth
It shuns th' unequal province of your praise.
Thus far triumphant in the pleasing guile
Of bland Imagination Folly's train
Have dar'd our search; but now a dastard kind
Advance reluctant, and with falt'ring feet
Shrink from the gazer's eye: enfeebled hearts!
Whom Fancy chills with visionary fears,
Or bends to servile tameness with conceits
Of shame, of evil, or of base defect,
Fantastick and delusive. Here the slave
Who droops abash'd when sullen Pomp surveys
His humbler habit; here the trembling wretch,
Unnerv'd and struck with Terrour's icy bolts,
Spent in weak wailings, drown'd in shameful tears,
At ev'ry dream of danger; here, subdu'd
By frontless Laughter and the hardy scorn
Of old unfeeling Vice, the abject soul
Who, blushing, half resigns the candid praise
Of temperance and honour, half disowns
A freeman's hatred of tyrannick pride,
And hears with sickly smiles the venal mouth
With foulest licence mock the patriot's name.

V. 207. *Thus far triumphant*, &c.] Ridicule from false shame or groundless fear.

Laſt of the motley bands on whom the pow'r
Of gay Deriſion bends her hoſtile aim
Is that where ſhameful ignorance preſides.
Beneath her ſordid banners, lo! they march
Like blind and lame. Whate'er their doubtful hands
Attempt, Confuſion ſtraight appears behind
And troubles all the work. Thro' many a maze
Perplex'd they ſtruggle, changing ev'ry path,
O'erturning ev'ry purpoſe, then at laſt
Sit down diſmay'd, and leave th' entangled ſcene
For ſcorn to ſport with. Such then is th' abode
Of Folly in the mind, and ſuch the ſhapes
In which ſhe governs her obſequious train.

Thro' ev'ry ſcene of ridicule in things
To lead the tenour of my devious lay,
Thro' ev'ry ſwift occaſion which the hand
Of Laughter points at when the mirthful ſting
Diſtends her ſallying nerves and chokes her tongue,
What were it but to count each cryſtal drop
Which Morning's dewy fingers on the blooms
Of May diſtil? Suffice it to have ſaid

V. 228. *Laſt of the*, &c.] Ridicule from the ignorance of ſuch things as our circumſtances require us to know.

V. 248.---*Suffice it to have ſaid*, &c.] By comparing theſe general ſources of ridicule with each other, and examining the ridiculous in other objects, we may obtain a general definition of it equally applicable to every ſpecies. The moſt important circumſtance of this definition is laid down in the lines referred to, but others more minute we ſhall ſubjoin here.

Where'er the pow'r of Ridicule diſplays
Her quaint-ey'd viſage ſome incongr'ous form,

Ariſtotle's account of the matter ſeems both imperfect and falſe; for ſays he, "The ridiculous is ſome certain fault "or turpitude without pain, and not deſtructive to its ſub-"ject." *Poet*. c. 5. For allowing it to be true, as it is not, that the ridiculous is never accompanied with pain, yet we might produce many inſtances of ſuch a fault or turpitude which cannot with any tolerable propriety be called ridiculous, ſo that the definition does not diſtinguiſh the thing deſigned. Nay, farther, even when we perceive the turpitude tending to the deſtruction of its ſubject, we may ſtill be ſenſible of a ridiculous appearance till the ruin become imminent, and the keener ſenſations of pity or terrour baniſh the ludicrous apprehenſion from our minds; for the ſenſation of ridicule is not a bare perception of the agreement or diſagreement of ideas, but a paſſion or emotion of the mind conſequential to that perception; ſo that the mind may perceive the agreement or diſagreement, and yet not feel the ridiculous, becauſe it is engroſſed by a more violent emotion. Thus it happens that ſome men think thoſe objects ridiculous to which others cannot endure to apply the name, becauſe in them they excite a much intenſer and more important feeling: and this difference, among other cauſes, has brought a good deal of confuſion into this queſtion.

"That which makes objects ridiculous is ſome ground of "admiration or eſteem connected with other more general "circumſtances comparatively worthleſs or deformed; or it "is ſome circumſtance of turpitude or deformity connected "with what is in general excellent or beautiful; the incon-"ſiſtent properties exiſting either in the objects themſelves, "or in the apprehenſion of the perſon to whom they relate, "belonging always to the ſame order or claſs of being, imply-"ing ſentiment or deſign, and exciting no acute or vehement "emotion of the heart."

Some ſtubborn diſſonance of things combin'd,
Strikes on the quick obſerver, whether Pomp,

To prove the ſeveral parts of this definition: "The appearance of excellence or beauty connected with a general condition comparatively ſordid or deformed" is ridiculous: for inſtance, pompous pretenſions of wiſdom, joined with ignorance or folly, in the Socrates of Ariſtophanes, and the oſtentations of military glory with cowardice and ſtupidity, in the Thraſo of Terence.

"The appearance of deformity or turpitude in conjunction "with what is in general excellent or venerable" is alſo ridiculous: for inſtance, the perſonal weakneſs of a magiſtrate appearing in the ſolemn and publick functions of his ſtation.

"The incongruous properties may either exiſt in the objects themſelves, or in the apprehenſion of the perſon to "whom they relate:" in the laſt mentioned inſtance they both exiſt in the objects; in the inſtances from Ariſtophanes and Terence one of them is objective and real, the other only founded in the apprehenſion of the ridiculous character.

"The inconſiſtent properties muſt belong to the ſame order or claſs of being." A coxcomb in fine clothes bedaubed by accident in foul weather is a ridiculous object; becauſe his general apprehenſion of excellence and eſteem is referred to the ſplendour and expence of his dreſs. A man of ſenſe and merit in the ſame circumſtances is not counted ridiculous, becauſe the general ground of excellence and eſteem in him is, both in fact and in his own apprehenſion, of a very different ſpecies.

"Every ridiculous object implies ſentiment or deſign." A column placed by an architect without a capital or baſe is laughed at; the ſame column in a ruin cauſes a very different ſenſation.

And, laſtly, "the occurrence muſt excite no acute or vehement emotion of the heart," ſuch as terrour, pity, or indignation; for in that caſe, as was obſerved above, the mind is not at leaſure to contemplate the ridiculous.

Whether any appearance not ridiculous be involved in this

Or Praise, or Beauty, mix their partial claim,
Where sordid fashions, where ignoble deeds,
Where foul Deformity, are wont to dwell,
Or whether these with violation loth'd
Invade resplendent Pomp's imperious mien,
The charms of Beauty or the boast of Praise.
Ask we for what fair end th' Almighty Sire

description, and whether it comprehend every species and form of the ridiculous, must be determined by repeated applications of it to particular instances.

V. 259. *Ask we for what fair end*, &c.] Since it is beyond all contradiction evident that we have a natural sense or feeling of the ridiculous, and since so good a reason may be assigned to justify the Supreme Being for bestowing it, one cannot without astonishment reflect on the conduct of those men who imagine it is for the service of true religion to vilify and blacken it without distinction, and endeavour to persuade us that it is never applied but in a bad cause. Ridicule is not concerned with mere speculative truth or falsehood. It is not in abstract propositions or theorems, but in actions and passions, good and evil, beauty and deformity, that we find materials for it; and all these terms are relative, implying approbation or blame. To ask them whether ridicule be a test of truth is, in other words, to ask whether that which is ridiculous can be morally true, can be just and becoming; or whether that which is just and becoming can be ridiculous: a question that does not deserve a serious answer; for it is most evident that, as in a metaphysical proposition offered to the understanding for its assent, the faculty of reason examines the terms of the proposition, and finding one idea which was supposed equal to another to be in fact unequal, of consequence rejects the proposition as a falsehood: so in objects offered to the mind for its esteem or applause the faculty of ridicule finding an incongruity in the claim urges the mind to reject it with laughter and contempt. When therefore we observe such a claim obtruded upon mankind, and the inconsistent cir-

In mortal boſoms wakes this gay contempt,
Theſe grateful ſtings of laughter, from diſguſt
Educing pleaſure? Wherefore but to aid

cumſtances carefully concealed from the eye of the publick, it is our buſineſs, if the matter be of importance to ſociety, to drag out thoſe latent circumſtances, and by ſetting them in full view to convince the world how ridiculous the claim is: and thus a double advantage is gained, for we both detect the moral falſehood ſooner than in the way of ſpeculative inquiry, and impreſs the minds of men with a ſtronger ſenſe of the vanity and errour of its authors. And this and more is meant by the application of ridicule.

But it is ſaid the practice is dangerous, and may be inconſiſtent with the regard we owe to objects of real dignity and excellence. I anſwer, the practice fairly managed can never be dangerous: men may be diſhoneſt in obtruding circumſtances foreign to the object, and we may be inadvertent in allowing thoſe circumſtances to impoſe upon us; but the ſenſe of ridicule always judges right. The Socrates of Ariſtophanes is as truly ridiculous a character as ever was drawn:— true; but it is not the character of Socrates, the divine moraliſt, and father of ancient wiſdom. What then? did the ridicule of the poet hinder the philoſopher from detecting and diſclaiming theſe foreign circumſtances which he had falſely introduced into his character, and thus rendered the ſatiriſt doubly ridiculous in his turn? No; but it nevertheleſs had an ill influence on the minds of the people. And ſo has the reaſoning of Spinoza made many Atheiſts: he has founded it indeed on ſuppoſitions utterly falſe; but allow him these, and his concluſions are unavoidably true. And if we muſt reject the uſe of ridicule becauſe by the impoſition of falſe circumſtances things may be made to ſeem ridiculous which are not ſo in themſelves, why we ought not in the ſame manner to reject the uſe of reaſon, becauſe by proceeding on falſe principles concluſions will appear true which are impoſſible in nature, let the vehement and obſtinate declaimers againſt ridicule determine.

The tardy ſteps of Reaſon, and at once
By this prompt impulſe urge us to depreſs
The giddy aims of Folly? Tho' the light
Of truth ſlow dawning on th' inquiring mind
At length unfolds thro' many a ſubtle tie
How theſe uncouth diſorders end at laſt
In publick evil, yet benignant Heav'n,
Conſcious how dim the dawn of truth appears
To thouſands, conſcious what a ſcanty pauſe
From labours and from care the wider lot
Of humble life affords for ſtudious thought
To ſcan the maze of Nature, therefore ſtamp'd
The glaring ſcenes with characters of ſcorn
As broad, as obvious, to the paſſing clown
As to the letter'd ſage's curious eye.

Such are the various aſpects of the mind.—
Some heav'nly genius whoſe unclouded thoughts
Attain that ſecret harmony which blends
Th' ethereal ſpirit with its mould of clay,
O! teach me to reveal the grateful charm
That ſearchleſs Nature o'er the ſenſe of man
Diffuſes, to behold in lifeleſs things
The inexpreſſive ſemblance of himſelf,
Of thought and paſſion; mark the ſable woods
That ſhade ſublime yon' mountain's nodding brow;

V. 285. *The inexpreſſive ſemblance*, &c.] This ſimilitude is the foundation of almoſt all the ornaments of poetick diction.

With what religious awe the ſolemn ſcene
Commands your ſteps! as if the rev'rend form
Of Minos or of Numa ſhould forſake
Th' Elyſian ſeats, and down th' embow'ring glade
Move to your pauſing eye! behold th' expanſe
Of yon' gay landſcape, where the ſilver clouds
Flit o'er the heav'ns before the ſprightly breeze;
Now their grey cincture ſkirts the doubtful ſun,
Now ſtreams of ſplendour thro' their op'ning veil
Effulgent ſweep from off the gilded lawn
Th' aerial ſhadows on the curling brook
And on the ſhady margin's quiv'ring leaves
With quickeſt luſtre glancing: while you view
The proſpect, ſay, within your cheerful breaſt
Plays not the lively ſenſe of winning Mirth
With clouds and ſunſhine checker'd, while the round
Of ſocial converſe to th' inſpiring tongue
Of ſome gay nymph amid her ſubject train
Moves all obſequious? Whence is this effect,
This kindred pow'r of ſuch diſcordant things?
Or flows their ſemblance from that myſtick tone
To which the newborn mind's harmonious pow'rs
At firſt were ſtrung? or rather from the links
Which artful Cuſtom twines around her frame?
  For when the diff'rent images of things
By Chance combin'd have ſtruck th' attentive ſoul
With deeper impulſe, or connected long
Have drawn her frequent eye, howe'er diſtinct

Th' external ſcenes, yet oft' the ideas gain
From that conjunction an eternal tie
And ſympathy unbroken. Let the mind
Recall one partner of the various league
Immediate, lo! the firm confed'rates riſe,
And each his former ſtation ſtraight reſumes,
One movement governs the conſenting throng,
And all at once with roſy pleaſure ſhine,
Or all are ſadden'd with the glooms of care.
'Twas thus, if ancient Fame the truth unfold,
Two faithful needles from th' informing touch
Of the ſame parent-ſtone together drew
Its myſtick virtue, and at firſt conſpir'd
With fatal impulſe quiv'ring to the pole;
Then tho' disjoin'd by kingdoms, tho' the main
Roll'd its broad ſurge betwixt, and diff'rent ſtars
Beheld their wakeful motions, yet preſerv'd
The former friendſhip, and remember'd ſtill
Th' alliance of their birth: whate'er the line
Which one poſſeſs'd, nor pauſe nor quiet knew
The ſure aſſociate ere with trembling ſpeed
He found its path, and fix'd unerring there.
Such is the ſecret union when we feel
A ſong, a flow'r, a name, at once reſtore
Thoſe long connected ſcenes where firſt they mov'd

V 326. *Two faithful needles*, &c.] See the elegant poem recited by Cardinal Bembo in the character of Lucretius. *Strada Proluſ.* vi. *Academ.* 2. c. v.

Th' attention, backward thro' her mazy walks
Guiding the wanton fancy to her ſcope,
To temples, courts, or fields, with all the band
Of painted forms, of paſſions and deſigns
Attendant, whence if pleaſing in itſelf
The proſpect from that ſweet acceſſion gains
Redoubled influence o'er the liſt'ning mind.
By theſe myſterious ties the buſy pow'r
Of Mem'ry her ideal train preſerves
Entire, or when they would elude her watch
Reclaims their fleeting footſteps from the waſte
Of dark oblivion; thus collecting all
The various forms of being to preſent
Before the curious aim of mimick Art
Their largeſt choice, like ſpring's unfolded blooms,
Exhaling ſweetneſs that the ſkilful bee
May taſte at will from their ſelected ſpoils
To work her dulcet food: for not th' expanſe
Of living lakes in ſummer's noontide calm
Reflects the bord'ring ſhade and ſunbright heav'ns
With fairer ſemblance, not the ſculptur'd gold
More faithful keeps the graver's lively trace,
Than he whoſe birth the ſiſter pow'rs of Art
Propitious view'd, and from his genial ſtar
Shed influence to the ſeeds of fancy kind,
Than his attemper'd boſom muſt preſerve

V. 348. *By theſe myſterious ties,* &c.] The act of remembering ſeems almoſt wholly to depend on the aſſociation of ideas.

The ſeal of Nature; there alone unchang'd
Her form remains; the balmy walks of May
There breathe perennial ſweets, the trembling chord
Reſounds for ever in th' abſtracted ear
Melodious, and the virgin's radiant eye,
Superiour to diſeaſe, to grief and time,
Shines with unbating luſtre. Thus at length
Endow'd with all that Nature can beſtow
The child of Fancy oft' in ſilence bends
O'er theſe mixt treaſures of his pregnant breaſt
With conſcious pride; from them he oft' reſolves
To frame he knows not what excelling things,
And win he knows not what ſublime reward
Of praiſe and wonder. By degrees the Mind
Feels her young nerves dilate, the plaſtick pow'rs
Labour for action, blind emotions heave
His boſom, and with lovelieſt frenzy caught
From earth to heav'n he rolls his daring eye,
From heav'n to earth. Anon ten thouſand ſhapes,
Like ſpectres trooping to the wizard's call,
Flit ſwift before him: from the womb of earth
From ocean's bed, they come: th' eternal heav'ns
Diſcloſe their ſplendours, and the dark abyſs
Pours out her births unknown. With fixed gaze
He marks the riſing phantoms, now compares
Their diff'rent forms, now blends them, now divides,
Enlarges and extenuates by turns;
Oppoſes, ranges in fantaſtick bands,

And infinitely varies: hither now,
Now thither, fluctuates his inconſtant aim,
With endleſs choice perplex'd. At length his plan
Begins to open, lucid order dawns,
And as from Chaos old the jarring ſeeds
Of Nature at the voice divine repair'd
Each to its place, till roſy earth unveil'd
Her fragrant boſom, and the joyful ſun
Sprung up the blue ſerene, by ſwift degrees
Thus diſentangled his entire deſign
Emerges. Colours mingle, features join,
And lines converge; the fainter parts retire,
The fairer eminent in light advance,
And ev'ry image on its neighbour ſmiles.
A while he ſtands, and with a father's joy
Contemplates, then with Promethean art
Into its proper vehicle he breathes
The fair conception, which imbody'd thus
And permanent becomes to eyes or ears
An object aſcertain'd; while thus inform'd
The various organs of his mimick ſkill,
The conſonance of ſounds, the featur'd rock,
The ſhadowy picture and impaſſion'd verſe,
Beyond their proper pow'rs attracts the ſoul
By that expreſſive ſemblance, while in ſight

V. 411. *Into its proper vehicle,* &c.] This relates to the different ſorts of corporeal mediums by which the ideas of the artiſts are rendered palpable to the ſenſes, as by ſounds in muſick, by lines and ſhadows in painting, by diction in poetry, &c.

Of Nature's great original we ſcan
The lively child of Art, while line by line
And feature after feature we refer
To that ſublime exemplar whence it ſtole
Thoſe animating charms. Thus beauty's palm
Betwixt them wav'ring hangs, applauding love
Doubts where to chuſe, and mortal man aſpires
To tempt creative praiſe. As when a cloud
Of gath'ring hail with limpid cruſts of ice
Encloſ'd, and obvious to the beaming ſun,
Collects his large effulgence, ſtraight the heav'ns
With equal flames preſent on either hand
The radiant viſage, Perſia ſtands at gaze
Appall'd, and on the brink of Ganges doubts
The ſnowy veſted ſeer, in Mithra's name,
To which the fragrance of the ſouth ſhall burn,
To which his warbled oriſons aſcend.
Such various bliſs the well-tun'd heart enjoys
Favour'd of Heav'n, while plung'd in ſordid cares
Th' unfeeling vulgar mocks the boon divine,
And harſh Auſterity, from whoſe rebuke
Young Love and ſmiling Wonder ſhrink away,
Abaſh'd and chill of heart, with ſager frowns
Condemns the fair enchantment. On my ſtrain
Perhaps ev'n now ſome cold faſtidious judge
Caſts a diſdainful eye, and calls my toil,
And calls the love and beauty which I ſing,
The dream of Folly. Thou, grave Cenſor, ſay,

Is beauty then a dream, becauſe the glooms
Of dulneſs hang too heavy on thy ſenſe
To let her ſhine upon thee? So the man
Whoſe eye ne'er open'd on the light of heav'n
Might ſmile with ſcorn while raptur'd Viſion tells
Of the gay colour'd radiance fluſhing bright
O'er all creation. From the wiſe be far
Such groſs unhallow'd pride! Nor needs my ſong
Deſcend ſo low, but rather now unfold,
If human thought could reach or words unfold,
By what myſterious fabrick of the mind
The deep-felt joys and harmony of ſound
Reſult from airy motion, and from ſhape
The lovely phantoms of ſublime and fair.
By what fine ties hath God connected things,
When preſent in the mind, which in themſelves
Have no connexion? Sure the riſing ſun
O'er the cerulean convex of the ſea
With equal brightneſs and with equal warmth
Might roll his fiery orb, nor yet the ſoul
Thus feel her frame expanded, and her pow'rs
Exulting in the ſplendour ſhe beholds,
Like a young conq'ror moving thro' the pomp
Of ſome triumphal day. When join'd at eve
Soft-murm'ring ſtreams and gales of gentleſt breath
Melodious Philomela's wakeful ſtrain
Attemper, could not man's diſcerning ear
Thro' all its tones the ſympathy purſue,

Nor yet this breath divine of nameleſs joy
Steal thro' his veins and fan th' awaken'd heart,
Mild as the breeze yet rapt'rous as the ſong?
  But were not Nature ſtill endow'd at large
With all which life requires tho' unadorn'd
With ſuch enchantment? Wherefore then her form
So exquiſitely fair? her breath perfum'd
With ſuch ethereal ſweetneſs? whence her voice
Inform'd at will to raiſe or to depreſs
Th' impaſſion'd ſoul? and whence the robes of light
Which thus inveſt her with more lovely pomp
Than Fancy can deſcribe? Whence but from thee,
O Source Divine of everflowing love!
And thy unmeaſur'd goodneſs? Not content
With ev'ry food of life to nouriſh man,
By kind illuſions of the wond'ring ſenſe
Thou mak'ſt all Nature beauty to his eye
Or muſick to his ear: well pleas'd he ſcans
The goodly proſpect, and with inward ſmiles
Treads the gay verdure of the painted plain,
Beholds the azure canopy of heav'n,
And living lamps that over-arch his head
With more than regal ſplendour; bends his ears
To the full choir of water, air, and earth;
Nor heeds the pleaſing errour of his thought,
Nor doubts the painted green or azure arch,
Nor queſtions more the muſick's mingling ſounds
Than ſpace or motion, or eternal time;

So ſweet he feels their influence to attract
The fixed ſoul, to brighten the dull glooms
Of care, and make the deſtin'd road of life
Delightful to his feet. So fables tell
Th' advent'rous hero bound on hard exploits
Beholds with glad ſurpriſe, by ſecret ſpells
Of ſome kind ſage the patron of his toils,
A viſionary paradiſe diſclos'd
Amid the dubious wild; with ſtreams, and ſhades,
And airy ſongs, th' enchanted landſcape ſmiles,
Cheers his long labours, and renews his frame.
  What then is taſte, but theſe internal pow'rs
Active, and ſtrong, and ſeemingly alive
To each fine impulſe? a diſcerning ſenſe
Of decent and ſublime, with quick diſguſt
From things deform'd or diſarrang'd, or groſs
In ſpecies? This nor gems, nor ſtores of gold,
Nor purple ſtate, nor culture, can beſtow,
But God alone, when firſt his active hand
Imprints the ſecret bias of the ſoul.
He, mighty Parent! wiſe and juſt in all,
Free as the vital breeze or light of heav'n,
Reveals the charms of Nature. Aſk the ſwain
Who journeys homeward from a ſummer day's
Long labour, why forgetful of his toils
And due repoſe he loiters to behold
The ſunſhine gleaming as thro' amber clouds
O'er all the weſtern ſky? full ſoon, I ween,

His rude expreſſion and untutor'd airs
Beyond the pow'r of language will unfold
The form of Beauty ſmiling at his heart,
How lovely, how commanding! But tho' Heav'n
In ev'ry breaſt hath ſown theſe early ſeeds
Of love and admiration, yet in vain
Without fair culture's kind parental aid,
Without enliv'ning ſuns and genial ſhow'rs,
And ſhelter from the blaſt, in vain we hope
The tender plant ſhould rear its blooming head,
Or yield the harveſt promis'd in its ſpring.
Nor yet will ev'ry ſoil with equal ſtores
Repay the tiller's labour, or attend
His will obſequious, whether to produce
The olive or the laurel. Diff'rent minds
Incline to diff'rent objects; one purſues
The vaſt alone, the wonderful, the wild;
Another ſighs for harmony, and grace,
And gentleſt beauty. Hence when lightning fires
The arch of heav'n, and thunders rock the ground,
When furious whirlwinds rend the howling air,
And ocean groaning from his loweſt bed
Heaves his tempeſt'ous billows to the ſky,
Amid the mighty uproar while below
The nations tremble, Shakeſpeare looks abroad
From ſome high cliff ſuperior, and enjoys

V. 547. ---------*one purſues----The vaſt alone*, &c.] See the note to V. 18. of this book.

The elemental war; but Waller longs
All on the margin of fome flow'ry ftream
To fpread his carelefs limbs amid the cool
Of plantane fhades, and to the lift'ning deer
The tale of flighted vows and love's difdain
Refound foft-warbling all the livelong day:
Confenting Zephyr fighs, the weeping rill
Joins in his plaint melodious, mute the groves,
And hill and dale with all their echoes mourn.
Such and fo various are the taftes of men!
Oh bleft of Heav'n! whom not the languid fongs
Of Luxury the Siren, not the bribes
Of fordid Wealth, nor all the gaudy fpoils
Of pageant Honour, can feduce to leave
Thofe ever-blooming fweets which from the ftore
Of Nature fair Imagination culls
To charm th' enliven'd foul! What tho' not all
Of mortal offspring can attain the heights
Of envy'd life, tho' only few poffefs
Patrician treafures or imperial ftate?

V. 558. *Waller longs*, &c.]
"O! how I long my carelefs limbs to lay
"Under the plantain fhade, and all the day
"With amorous airs my fancy entertain," &c.
Waller. Battle of the Summer Iſlands, Canto I.
And again,
"While in the Park I fing the lift'ning deer,
"Attend my paffion and forget to fear," &c.
At Penſhurſt.

Yet Nature's care, to all her children juſt,
With richer treaſures and an ampler ſtate
Endows at large whatever happy man
Will deign to uſe them. His the city's pomp,
The rural honours his: whate'er adorns
The princely dome, the column and the arch,
The breathing marbles and the ſculptur'd gold,
Beyond the proud poſſeſſor's narrow claim,
His tuneful breaſt enjoys. For him the ſpring
Diſtils her dews, and from the ſilken gem
Its lucid leaves unfolds; for him the hand
Of Autumn tinges ev'ry fertile branch
With blooming gold and bluſhes like the Morn.
Each paſſing Hour ſheds tribute from her wings,
And ſtill new beauties meet his lonely walk,
And loves unfelt attract him. Not a breeze

V. 593. ——— *Not a breeze*, &c.] That this account may not appear rather poetically extravagant than juſt in philoſophy, it may be proper to produce the ſentiment of one of the greateſt, wiſeſt, and beſt of men on this head; one ſo little to be ſuſpected of partiality in the caſe, that he reckons it among thoſe favours for which he was eſpecially thankful to the gods, that they had not ſuffered him to make any great proficiency in the arts of eloquence and poetry, leſt by that means he ſhould have been diverted from purſuits of more importance to his high ſtation. Speaking of the beauty of univerſal Nature, he obſerves that "there is a pleaſing and grace-"ful aſpect in every object we perceive," when once we conſider its connexion with that general order. He inſtances in many things which at firſt ſight would be thought rather deformities, and then adds, "that a man who enjoys a ſenſibility of "temper, with a juſt comprehenſion of the univerſal order-

Flies o'er the meadow, not a cloud imbibes
The ſetting ſun's effulgence, not a ſtrain
From all the tenants of the warbling ſhade
Aſcends, but whence his boſom can partake
Freſh pleaſure unreprov'd: nor thence partakes
Freſh pleaſure only, for th' attentive mind
By this harmonious action on her pow'rs
Becomes herſelf harmonious: wont ſo oft'
In outward things to meditate the charm
Of ſacred order, ſoon ſhe ſeeks at home
To find a kindred order, to exert
Within herſelf this elegance of love,
This fair inſpir'd delight: her temper'd pow'rs
Refine at length, and ev'ry paſſion wears
A chaſter, milder, more attractive, mien.
But if to ampler proſpects, if to gaze
On Nature's form, where negligent of all
Theſe leſſer graces ſhe aſſumes the port
Of that Eternal Majeſty that weigh'd
The world's foundations; if to theſe the mind
Exalts her daring eye, then mightier far
Will be the change and nobler. Would the forms
Of ſervile cuſtom cramp her gen'rous pow'rs?
Would ſordid policies, the barb'rous growth
Of Ignorance and Rapine, bow her down

" will diſcern many amiable things, not credible to every
" mind, but to thoſe alone who have entered into an honour-
" able familiarity with Nature and her works." *M. Ant.* iii. 2.

To tame pursuits, to indolence and fear?
Lo! she appeals to Nature, to the winds
And rolling waves, the sun's unweary'd course,
The elements and seasons. All declare
For what th' Eternal Maker has ordain'd
The pow'rs of man: we feel within ourselves
His energy divine: he tells the heart
He meant, he made, us to behold and love
What he beholds and loves, the gen'ral orb
Of life and being; to be great like him,
Beneficent and active. Thus the men
Whom Nature's works can charm with God himself
Hold converse, grow familiar day by day
With his conceptions, act upon his plan,
And form to his the relish of their souls.

END OF BOOK THIRD.

THE

PLEASURES OF IMAGINATION.

THE GENERAL ARGUMENT.

THE Pleasures of the Imagination proceed either from natural objects, as from a flourishing grove, a clear and murmuring fountain, a calm sea by moonlight, or from works of art, such as a noble edifice, a musical tune, a statue, a picture, a poem. In treating of these Pleasures we must begin with the former class, they being original to the other; and nothing more being necessary in order to explain them than a view of our natural inclination toward greatness and beauty, and of those appearances in the world around us to which that inclination is adapted. This is the subject of the first book of the following poem.

But the Pleasures which we receive from the elegant arts, from musick, sculpture, painting, and poetry, are much more various and complicated. In them (besides greatness and beauty, or forms proper to the Imagination) we find interwoven frequent representations of truth, of virtue and vice, of circumstances proper to move us with laughter, or to excite in us pity, fear, and the other passions. These moral and intellectual objects are described in the second book, to which the third properly belongs as an episode, though too large to have been included in it.

With the abovementioned causes of Pleasure, which are universal in the course of human life, and appertain to

our higher faculties, many others do generally concur, more limited in their operation, or of an inferior origin: such are the novelty of objects, the association of ideas, affections of the bodily senses, influences of education, national habits, and the like. To illustrate these, and from the whole to determine the character of a perfect taste, is the argument of the fourth book.

Hitherto the Pleasures of the Imagination belong to the human species in general; but there are certain particular men whose Imagination is endowed with powers and susceptible of Pleasures which the generality of mankind never participate: these are the men of genius, destined by Nature to excel in one or other of the arts already mentioned. It is proposed therefore in the last place, to delineate that genius which in some degree appears common to them all, yet with a more peculiar consideration of poetry, inasmuch as poetry is the most extensive of these arts, the most philosophical, and the most useful.

THE

PLEASURES OF IMAGINATION.

BOOK I.

MDCCLVII.

THE ARGUMENT.

THE ſubject propoſed. Dedication. The ideas of the Supreme Being the exemplars of all things. The variety of conſtitution in the minds of men, with its final cauſe. The general character of a fine Imagination. All the immediate Pleaſures of the human Imagination proceed either from greatneſs or beauty in external objects. The Pleaſure from greatneſs, with its final cauſe. The natural connexion of beauty with truth * and good. The different orders of beauty in different objects. The infinite and allcomprehending form of beauty, which belongs to the Divine Mind. The partial and artificial forms of beauty which belong to inferior intellectual beings. The origin and general conduct of beauty in man. The ſubordination of local beauties to the beauty of the univerſe. Concluſion.

WITH what enchantment Nature's goodly ſcene
Attracts the ſenſe of mortals; how the mind
For its own eye doth objects nobler ſtill
Prepare; how men by various leſſons learn
To judge of Beauty's praiſe; what raptures fill
The breaſt with fancy's native arts endow'd,
And what true culture guides it to renown,
My Verſe unfolds. Ye gods or godlike Pow'rs!
Ye Guardians of the ſacred taſk! attend

* Truth is here taken not in a logical but in a mixed and popular ſenſe, or for what has been called the truth of things, denoting as well their natural and regular condition as proper eſtimate or judgment concerning them.

Propitious: hand in hand around your Bard
Move in majestick measures, leading on
His doubtful step thro' many a solemn path,
Conscious of secrets which to human sight
Ye only can reveal. Be great in him,
And let your favour make him wise to speak
Of all your wondrous empire, with a voice
So temper'd to his theme that those who hear
May yield perpetual homage to yourselves.
Thou chief, O daughter of eternal Love!
Whate'er thy name, or Muse or Grace, ador'd
By Grecian prophets, to the sons of Heav'n
Known while with deep amazement thou dost there
The perfect counsels read, th' ideas old
Of thine Omniscient Father, known on earth
By the still horror and the blissful tear
With which thou seizest on the soul of man,
Thou chief, Poetick Spirit! from the banks
Of Avon, whence thy holy fingers cull
Fresh flow'rs and dews to sprinkle on the turf
Where Shakespeare lies, be present; and with thee
Let Fiction come, on her aerial wings
Wafting ten thousand colours, which in sport
By the light glances of her magick eye
She blends and shifts at will thro' countless forms,
Her wild creation. Goddess of the Lyre,
Whose awful tones control the moving sphere,
Wilt thou, eternal Harmony! descend

And join this happy train? for with thee comes,
The guide the guardian of their myſtick rites,
Wiſe Order; and where Order deigns to come
Her ſiſter Liberty will not be far.
Be preſent all ye Genii! who conduct
Of youthful bards the lonely wand'ring ſtep
New to your ſprings and ſhades, who touch their ear
With finer ſounds, and heighten to their eye
The pomp of Nature, and before them place
The faireſt loftieſt countenance of things.
Nor thou, my Dyſon! to the lay refuſe
Thy wonted partial audience. What tho' firſt
In years unſeaſon'd, haply ere the ſports
Of childhood yet were o'er, the advent'rous lay
With many ſplendid proſpects, many charms,
Allur'd my heart, not conſcious whence they ſprung,
Nor heedful of their end? yet ſerious Truth
Her empire o'er the calm ſequeſter'd theme
Aſſerted ſoon, while Falſehood's evil brood,
Vice and deceitful Pleaſure, ſhe at once
Excluded, and my fancy's careleſs toil
Drew to the better cauſe. Maturer aid
Thy friendſhip added, in the paths of life,
The buſy paths, my unaccuſtom'd feet
Preſerving; nor to truth's receſs divine
Thro' this wide argument's unbeaten ſpace
Withholding ſurer guidance, while by turns
We trac'd the ſages old, or while the queen

Of Sciences, (whom manners and the mind
Acknowledge) to my true companion's voice
Not unattentive, o'er the wintry lamp
Inclin'd her ſceptre favouring. Now the Fates
Have other taſks impos'd. To thee, my Friend!
The miniſtry of freedom and the faith
Of popular decrees in early youth
Not vainly they committed. Me they ſent
To wait on pain, and ſilent arts to urge
Inglorious, not ignoble, if my cares
To ſuch as languiſh on a grievous bed
Eaſe and the ſweet forgetfulneſs of ill
Conciliate; nor delightleſs, if the Muſe
Her ſhades to viſit and to taſte her ſprings,
If ſome diſtinguiſh'd hours the bounteous Muſe
Impart, and grant (what ſhe and ſhe alone
Can grant to mortals) that my hand thoſe wreaths
Of fame and honeſt favour which the bleſs'd
Wear in Elyſium, and which never felt
The breath of Envy or malignant tongues,
That theſe my hand for thee and for myſelf
May gather. Mean-while, O my faithful Friend!
O early choſen, ever found the ſame,
And truſted and belov'd! once more the verſe
Long deſtin'd, always obvious to thine ear,
Attend indulgent: ſo in lateſt years,
When Time thy head with honours ſhall have cloth'd
Sacred to even Virtue, may thy mind

Amid the calm review of ſeaſons paſt,
Fair offices of friendſhip, or kind peace
Or publick zeal, may then thy mind well pleas'd
Recall theſe happy ſtudies of our prime!
From Heav'n my ſtrains begin, from Heav'n de-[ſcends
The flame of genius to the choſen breaſt,
And beauty, with poetick wonder join'd
And inſpiration. Ere the riſing ſun
Shone o'er the deep, or 'mid the vault of night
The moon her ſilver lamp ſuſpended, ere
The vales with ſprings were water'd, or with groves
Of oak or pine the ancient hills were crown'd,
Then the Great Spirit, whom his works adore,
Within his own deep eſſence view'd the forms,
The forms eternal, of created things,
The radiant ſun, the moon's nocturnal lamp,
The mountains and the ſtreams, the ample ſtores
Of earth, of heav'n, of Nature. From the firſt
On that full ſcene his love divine he fix'd,
His admiration, till in time complete
What he admir'd and lov'd his vital pow'r
Unfolded into being. Hence the breath
Of life informing each organick frame,
Hence the green earth, and wild reſounding waves,
Hence light and ſhade alternate, warmth and cold,
And brihgt autumnal ſkies and vernal ſhow'rs,
And all the fair variety of things.
But not alike to ev'ry mortal eye

Is this great ſcene unveil'd; for while the claims
Of ſocial life to diff'rent labours urge
The active pow'rs of man, with wiſeſt care
Hath Nature on the multitude of minds
Impreſs'd a various bias, and to each
Decreed its province in the common toil.
To ſome ſhe taught the fabrick of the ſphere,
The changeful moon, the circuit of the ſtars,
The golden zones of heav'n: to ſome ſhe gave
To ſearch the ſtory of eternal thought,
Of ſpace and time, of Fate's unbroken chain,
And will's quick movement: others by the hand
She led o'er vales and mountains, to explore
What healing virtue dwells in ev'ry vein
Of herbs or trees. But ſome to nobler hopes
Were deſtin'd; ſome within a finer mould
She wrought, and temper'd with a purer flame:
To theſe the Sire Omnipotent unfolds
In fuller aſpects and with fairer lights
This picture of the world. Thro' ev'ry part
They trace the lofty ſketches of his hand;
In earth or air, the meadow's flow'ry ſtore,
The moon's mild radiance, or the virgin's mien,
Dreſs'd in attractive ſmiles, they ſee portray'd
(As far as mortal eyes the portrait ſcan)
Thoſe lineaments of beauty which delight
The mind ſupreme: they alſo feel their force
Enamour'd: they partake th' eternal joy.

For as old Memnon's image, long renown'd
Thro' fabling Egypt, at the genial touch
Of morning from its inmoft frame fent forth
Spontaneous mufick, fo doth Nature's hand
To certain attributes which matter claims
Adapt the finer organs of the mind;
So the glad impulfe of thofe kindred pow'rs
(Of form, of colour's cheerful pomp, of found
Melodious, or of motion aptly fped)
Detains th' enliven'd fenfe, till foon the foul
Feels the deep concord, and affents thro' all
Her functions. Then the charm by Fate prepar'd
Diffufeth its enchantment; Fancy dreams,
Rapt into high difcourfe with prophets old,
And wand'ring thro' Elyfium, Fancy dreams
Of facred fountains, of o'erfhadowing groves,
Whofe walks with godlike harmony refound,
Fountains which Homer vifits, happy groves
Where Milton dwells. The intellectual pow'r
On the mind's throne fufpends his graver cares,
And fmiles: the paffions to divine repofe
Perfuaded yield, and love and joy alone
Are waking; love and joy, fuch as await
An angel's meditation. O! attend,
Whoe'er thou art whom thefe delights can touch,
Whom Nature's afpect, Nature's fimple garb,
Can thus command: O! liften to my Song,
And I will guide thee to her blifsful walks,

And teach thy ſolitude her voice to hear,
And point her gracious features to thy view.
  Know then whate'er of the world's ancient ſtore,
Whate'er of mimick art's reflected ſcenes,
With love and admiration thus inſpire
Attentive Fancy, her delighted ſons
In two illuſtrious orders comprehend
Selftaught. From him whoſe ruſtick toil the lark
Cheers warbling, to the bard whoſe daring thoughts
Range the full orb of being, ſtill the form
Which Fancy worſhips or ſublime or fair
Her votaries proclaim. I ſee them dawn!
I ſee the radiant viſions where they riſe,
More lovely than when Lucifer diſplays
His glitt'ring forehead thro' the gates of morn
To lead the train of Phœbus and the ſpring!
  Say, why was man ſo eminently rais'd
Amid the vaſt creation? why empower'd
Thro' life and death to dart his watchful eye,
With thoughts beyond the limit of his frame,
But that th' Omnipotent might ſend him forth,
In ſight of angels and immortal minds,
As on an ample theatre, to join
In conteſt with his equals, who ſhall beſt
The taſk atchieve, the courſe of noble toils,
By wiſdom and by mercy preordain'd?
Might ſend him forth the ſovran good to learn,
To chace each meaner purpoſe from his breaſt,

And thro' the miſts of paſſion and of ſenſe,
And thro' the pelting ſtorms of chance and pain,
To hold ſtraight on, with conſtant heart and eye
Still fix'd upon his everlaſting palm,
Th' approving ſmile of Heav'n? Elſe wherefore burns
In mortal boſoms this unquenched hope
That ſeeks from day to day ſublimer ends,
Happy tho' reſtleſs? why departs the ſoul
Wide from the track and journey of her times
To graſp the good ſhe knows not? in the field
Of things which may be, in the ſpacious field
Of ſcience, potent arts, or dreadful arms,
To raiſe up ſcenes in which her own deſires
Contented may repoſe, when things which are
Pall on her temper like a twice told tale;
Her temper, ſtill demanding to be free,
Spurning the rude control of wilful Might,
Proud of her dangers brav'd, her griefs endur'd,
Her ſtrength ſeverely prov'd? To theſe high aims
Which reaſon and affection prompt in man
Not adverſe nor unapt hath Nature fram'd
His bold Imagination; for amid
The various forms which this full world preſents
Like rivals to his choice, what human breaſt
E'er doubts before the tranſient and minute
To prize the vaſt, the ſtable, the ſublime?
Who that from heights aerial ſends his eye
Around a wild horizon, and ſurveys

Indus or Ganges rolling his broad wave
Thro' mountains, plains, through ſpacious cities old,
And regions dark with woods, will turn away
To mark the path of ſome penurious rill
Which murm'reth at his feet? Where does the Soul
Conſent her ſoaring fancy to reſtrain,
Which bears her up as on an eagle's wings
Deſtin'd for higheſt heav'n? or which of Fate's
Tremendous barriers ſhall confine her flight
To any humbler quarry? The rich earth
Cannot detain her, nor the ambient air
With all its changes. For a while with joy
She hovers o'er the ſun, and views the ſmall
Attendant orbs beneath his ſacred beam
Emerging from the deep, like cluſter'd iſles,
Whoſe rocky ſhores to the glad ſailor's eye
Reflect the gleams of morning; for a while
With pride ſhe ſees his firm paternal ſway
Bend the reluctant planets to move each
Round its perpetual year; but ſoon ſhe quits
That proſpect; meditating loftier views
She darts adventrous up the long career
Of comets, thro' the conſtellations holds
Her courſe, and now looks back on all the ſtars,
Whoſe blended flames as with a milky ſtream
Part the blue region. Empyrean tracks,
Where happy ſouls beyond this concave heav'n
Abide, ſhe then explores, whence purer light

For countless ages travels thro' th' abyss,
Nor hath in sight of mortals yet arriv'd:
Upon the wide creation's utmost shore
At length she stands, and the dread space beyond
Contemplates, half recoiling; nathless down
The gloomy void astonish'd yet unquell'd,
She plungeth, down th' unfathomable gulf
Where God alone hath being; there her hopes
Rest at the fated goal: for from the birth
Of humankind the Sovran Maker said
That not in humble nor in brief delight,
Not in the fleeting echoes of Renown,
Pow'r's purple robes, nor Pleasure's flow'ry lap,
The soul should find contentment, but from these
Turning disdainful to an equal good,
Thro' Nature's op'ning walks enlarge her aim,
Till ev'ry bound at length should disappear
And infinite perfection fill the scene.
But lo! where beauty dress'd in gentler pomp
With comely steps advancing claims the verse
Her charms inspire, O Beauty! source of praise,
Of honour, ev'n to mute and lifeless things;
O thou that kindlest in each human heart
Love and the wish of poets, when their tongue
Would teach to other bosoms what so charms
Their own! O child of Nature and the Soul
In happiest hour brought forth, the doubtful garb
Of words, of earthly language, all too mean,

Too lowly, I account in which to clothe
Thy form divine! for thee the mind alone
Beholds, nor half thy brightneſs can reveal
Thro' thoſe dim organs whoſe corporeal touch
O'erſhadowed thy pure eſſence. Yet my Muſe!
If Fortune call thee to the taſk, wait thou
Thy favourable ſeaſons; then while fear
And doubt are abſent thro' wide Nature's bounds
Expatiate with glad ſtep, and chuſe at will
Whate'er bright ſpoils the florid earth contains,
Whate'er the waters or the liquid air,
To manifeſt unblemiſh'd Beauty's praiſe,
And o'er the breaſts of mortals to extend
Her gracious empire. Wilt thou to the iſles
Atlantick, to the rich Heſperian clime,
Fly in the train of Autumn, and look on
And learn from him, while as he roves around
Where'er his fingers touch the fruitful grove
The branches bloom with gold, where'er his foot
Imprints the ſoil the ripening cluſters ſwell,
Turning aſide their foliage, and come forth
In purple lights, till ev'ry hillock glows
As with the bluſhes of an ev'ning ſky?
Or wilt thou that Theſſalian landſcape trace
Where ſlow Peneus his clear glaſſy tide
Draws ſmooth along, between the winding cliffs
Of Offa and the pathleſs woods unſhorn
That wave o'er huge Olympus? Down the ſtream

Look how the mountains with their double range
Embrace the vale of Tempe, from each ſide
Aſcending ſteep to heav'n a rocky mound
Cover'd with ivy and the laurel boughs
That crown'd young Phœbus for the Python ſlain.
Fair Tempe! on whoſe primroſe banks the morn
Awoke moſt fragrant, and the noon repos'd
In pomp of lights and ſhadows moſt ſublime;
Whoſe lawns, whoſe glades, ere human footſteps yet
Had trac'd an entrance, were the hallow'd haunt
Of ſylvan pow'rs immortal, where they ſat
Oft' in the Golden Age, the Nymph and Fauns,
Beneath ſome arbour branching o'er the flood,
And leaning round hung on th' inſtructive lips
Of hoary Pan, or o'er ſome open dale,
Danc'd in light meaſures to his ſev'nfold pipe,
While Zephyr's wanton hand along their path
Flung ſhow'rs of painted bloſſoms, fertile dews,
And one perpetual ſpring. But if our taſk
More lofty rites demand, with all good vows
Then let us haſten to the rural haunt
Where young Meliſſa dwells; nor thou refuſe
The voice which calls thee from thy lov'd retreat,
But hither, gentle Maid! thy footſteps turn;
Here to thy own unqueſtionable theme
O fair! O graceful! bend thy poliſh'd brow,
Aſſenting, and the gladneſs of thy eyes
Impart to me, like morning's wiſhed light

Seen thro' the vernal air. By yonder ſtream,
Where beech and elm along the bord'ring mead
Send forth wild melody from ev'ry bough
Together let us wander, where the hills
Cover'd with fleeces to the lowing vale
Reply, where tidings of content and peace
Each echo brings. Lo how the weſtern ſun
O'er fields and floods, o'er ev'ry living ſoul
Diffuſeth glad repoſe! There while I ſpeak
Of Beauty's honours thou, Meliſſa! thou
Shalt hearken, not unconſcious, while I tell
How firſt from heav'n ſhe came, how after all
The works of life, the elemental ſcenes,
The hours, the ſeaſons, ſhe had oft' explor'd,
At length her fav'rite manſion and her throne
She fix'd in woman's form; what pleaſing ties
To virtue bind her, what effectual aid
They lend each other's pow'r, and how divine
Their union, ſhould ſome unambitious maid
To all th' enchantment of th' Idalian queen
Add ſanctity and wiſdom. While my tongue
Prolongs the tale, Meliſſa! thou may'ſt feign
To wonder whence my rapture is inſpir'd;
But ſoon the ſmile which dawns upon thy lip
Shall tell it, and the tend'rer bloom o'er all
That ſoft cheek ſpringing to the marble neck,
Which bends aſide in vain, revealing more
What it would thus keep ſilent, and in vain

The ſenſe of praiſe diſſembling. Then my ſong
Great Nature's winning arts, which thus inform
With joy and love the rugged breaſt of man,
Should ſound in numbers worthy of ſuch a theme;
While all whoſe ſouls have ever felt the force
Of thoſe enchanting paſſions to my lyre
Should throng attentive, and receive once more
Their influence, unobſcur'd by any cloud
Of vulgar care, and purer than the hand
Of Fortune can beſtow: nor to confirm
Their ſway ſhould awful Contemplation ſcorn
To join his dictates to the genuine ſtrain
Of Pleaſure's tongue, nor yet ſhould Pleaſure's ear
Be much averſe. Ye chiefly, gentle band
Of Youths and Virgins! who thro' many a wiſh
And many a fond purſuit, as in ſome ſcene
Of magick bright and fleeting are allur'd
By various beauty, if the pleaſing toil
Can yield a moment's reſpite, hither turn
Your favourable ear, and truſt my words.
I do not mean on bleſs'd Religion's ſeat
Preſenting Superſtition's gloomy form
To daſh your ſoothing hopes; I do not mean
To bid the jealous Thund'rer fire the heav'ns,
Or ſhapes infernal rend the groaning earth,
And ſcare you from your joys. My cheerful ſong
With happier omens calls you to the field,
Pleas'd with your gen'rous ardour in the chace,

And warm like you. Then tell me, (for ye know)
Doth Beauty ever deign to dwell where use
And aptitude are ſtrangers? is her praiſe
Confeſs'd in aught whoſe moſt peculiar ends
Are lame and fruitleſs? or did Nature mean
This pleaſing call the herald of a lie,
To hide the ſhame of diſcord and diſeaſe,
And win each fond admirer into ſnares,
Foil'd, baffled? No: with better providence
The gen'ral Mother, conſcious how infirm
Her offspring tread the paths of good and ill,
Thus to the choice of credulous deſire
Doth objects the completeſt of their tribe
Diſtinguiſh and commend. Yon' flow'ry bank
Cloth'd in the ſoft magnificence of ſpring
Will not the flocks approve it? will they aſk
The reedy fen for paſture? That clear rill
Which trickleth murm'ring from the moſſy rock,
Yields it leſs wholeſome bev'rage to the worn
And thirſty trav'ller than the ſtanding pool
With muddy weeds o'ergrown? Yon' ragged vine,
Whoſe lean and ſullen cluſters mourn the rage
Of Eurus, will the wineprefs or the bowl
Report of her as of the ſwelling grape
Which glitters thro' the tendrils like a gem
When firſt it meets the ſun? Or what are all
The various charms to life and ſenſe adjoin'd?
Are they not pledges of a ſtate entire,

Where native order reigns, with ev'ry part
In health and ev'ry function well perform'd?
  Thus then at firſt was Beauty ſent from heav'n
The lovely miniſtreſs of Truth and Good
In this dark world; for Truth and Good are one,
And Beauty dwells in them and they in her
With like participation. Wherefore then,
O Sons of Earth! would ye diſſolve the tie?
O! wherefore with a raſh and greedy aim
Seek ye to rove thro' every flatt'ring ſcene
Which Beauty ſeems to deck, nor once inquire
Where is the ſuffrage of eternal Truth,
Or where the ſeal of undeceitful good,
To ſave your ſearch from folly? Wanting theſe
Lo! Beauty withers in your void embrace,
And with the glitt'ring of an idiot's toy
Did fancy mock your vows. Nor yet let hope,
That kindlieſt inmate of the youthful breaſt,
Be hence appall'd, be turn'd to coward ſloth,
Sitting in ſilence with dejected eyes,
Incurious, and with folded hands: far leſs
Let ſcorn of wild fantaſtick folly's dreams,
Or hatred of the bigot's ſavage pride,
Perſuade you e'er that Beauty, or the love
Which waits on Beauty, may not brook to hear
The ſacred lore of undeceitful good,
And truth eternal. From the vulgar crowd
Tho' Superſtition, tyranneſs abhorr'd!

The rev'rence due to this majeſtick pair
With threats and execration ſtill demands;
Tho' the tame wretch who aſks of her the way
To their celeſtial dwelling ſhe conſtrains
To quench or ſet at nought the lamp of God
Within his frame; thro' many a cheerleſs wild
Tho' forth ſhe leads him credulous and dark,
And aw'd with dubious notion; tho' at length
Haply ſhe plunge him into cloiſter'd cells
And manſions unrelenting as the grave,
But void of quiet, there to watch the hours
Of midnight, there amid the ſcreaming owl's
Dire ſong with ſpectres or with guilty ſhades
To talk of pangs and everlaſting woe;
Yet be not ye diſmay'd; a gentler ſtar
Preſides o'er your adventure. From the bow'r
Where Wiſdom ſat with her Athenian ſons
Could but my happy hand intwine a wreath
Of Plato's olive with the Mantuan bay,
Then (for what need of cruel fear to you,
To you whom godlike love can well command?)
Then ſhould my pow'rful voice at once diſpel
Thoſe monkiſh horrors; ſhould in words divine
Relate how favour'd minds like you inſpir'd,
And taught their inſpiration to conduct
By ruling Heav'n's decree, thro' various walks,
And proſpects various, but delightful all,
Move onward; while now myrtle groves appear

Now arms and radiant trophies, now the rods
Of empire with the curule throne, or now
The domes of Contemplation and the Muse.
Led by that hope sublime whose cloudless eye
Thro' the fair toils and ornaments of earth
Discerns the nobler life reserv'd for heav'n,
Favour'd alike they worship round the shrine
Where Truth conspic'ous with her sister-twins,
The undivided partners of her sway,
With Good and Beauty reigns. O! let not us
By Pleasure's lying blandishments detain'd,
Or crouching to the frowns of bigot Rage,
O! let not us one moment pause to join
That chosen band: and if the gracious Pow'r
Who first awaken'd my untutor'd song
Will to my invocation grant anew
The tuneful spirit, then thro' all our paths
Ne'er shall the sound of this devoted lyre
Be wa ting, whether on the rosy mead
When summer smiles to warn the melting heart
O! Luxury's allurement, whether firm
Against the torrent and the stubborn hill
To urge free Virtue's steps, and to her side
Summon that strong d vinity of soul
Which conquers Chanc and Fate, or on the height,
The goal assign'd her, haply to proclaim
Her triumph, on her brow to place the crown
Of uncorrupted praise, thro' future worlds

To follow her interminated way,
And blefs Heav'n's image in the heart of man.
Such is the worth of Beauty, fuch her pow'r,
So blamelefs, fo rever'd. It now remains
In juft gradation thro' the various ranks
Of being to contemplate how her gifts
Rife in due meafure, watchful to attend
The fteps of rifing Nature. Laft and leaft
In colours mingling with a random blaze
Doth Beauty dwell: then higher in the forms
Of fimpleft eafieft meafure, in the bounds
Of circle, cube, or fphere: the third afcent
To fymmetry adds colour: thus the pearl
Shines in the concave of its purple bed,
And painted fhells along fome winding fhore
Catch with indented folds the glancing fun.
Next as we rife appear the blooming tribes
Which clothe the fragrant earth, which draw from her
Their own nutrition, which are born and die,
Yet in their feed immortal: fuch the flow'rs
With which young Maia pays the village maids
That hail her natal morn, and fuch the groves
Which blithe Pomona rears on Vaga's bank
To feed the bowl of Ariconian fwains
Who quaff beneath her branches. Nobler ftill
Is Beauty's name where to the full confent
Of members and of features, to the pride
Of colour and the vital change of growth,

Life's holy flame with piercing ſenſe is giv'n,
While active motion ſpeaks the temper'd ſoul:
So moves the bird of Juno, ſo the ſteed
With rival ſwiftneſs beats the duſty plain,
And faithful dogs with eager airs of joy
Salute their fellows. What ſublimer pomp
Adorns the ſeat where Virtue dwells on earth
And Truth's eternal day-light ſhines around;
What palm belongs to man's imperial front,
And woman, pow'rful with becoming ſmiles,
Chief of terreſtrial natures! need we now
Strive to inculcate? Thus hath Beauty there
Her moſt conſpic'ous praiſe to Matter lent
Where moſt conſpic'ous thro' that ſhadowy veil
Breaks forth the bright expreſſion of a mind
By ſteps directing our enraptur'd ſearch
To him the firſt of minds, the chief, the ſole,
From whom thro' this wide complicated world
Did all her various lineaments begin;
To whom alone, conſenting and entire,
At once their mutual influence all diſplay.
He, God moſt high, (bear witneſs Earth and Heav'n!)
The living fountains in himſelf contains
Of beauteous and ſublime. With him inthron'd
Ere days or years trod their ethereal way,
In his ſupreme intelligence inthron'd,
The queen of Love holds her unclouded ſtate,
Urania. Thee, O Father! this extent

Of matter, thee the ſluggiſh earth and track
Of ſeas, the heav'ns and heav'nly ſplendours, feel
Pervading, quick'ning, moving. From the depth
Of thy great eſſence forth didſt thou conduct
Eternal Form, and there where Chaos reign'd
Gav'ſt her dominion to erect her ſeat
And ſanctify the manſion. All her works
Wellpleas'd thou didſt behold; the gloomy fires
Of ſtorm or earthquake, and the pureſt light
Of ſummer; ſoft Campania's newborn roſe,
And the ſlow weed which pines on Ruſſian hills,
Comely alike to thy full viſion ſtand;
To thy ſurrounding viſion, which unites
All eſſences and pow'rs of the great world
In one ſole order, fair alike they ſtand,
As features well conſenting, and alike
Requir'd by nature ere ſhe could attain
Her juſt reſemblance to the perfect ſhape
Of univerſal Beauty, which with thee
Dwelt from the firſt. Thou alſo, Ancient Mind!
Whom love and free beneficence await
In all thy doings, to inferior minds
Thy offspring, and to man thy youngeſt ſon,
Refuſing no convenient gift nor good,
Their eyes didſt open in this earth, yon' heav'n,
Thoſe ſtarry worlds, the countenance divine
Of Beauty to behold: but not to them
Didſt thou her awful magnitude reveal

Such as before thine own unbounded ſight
She ſtands, (for never ſhall created ſoul
Conceive that object) nor to all their kinds
The ſame in ſhape or features didſt thou frame
Her image. Meaſuring well their dif'rent ſpheres
Of ſenſe and action, thy paternal hand
Hath for each race prepar'd a diff'rent teſt
Of Beauty, own'd and reverenc'd as their guide
Moſt apt, moſt faithful. Thence inform'd they ſcan
The objects that ſurround them, and ſelect,
Since the great whole diſclaims their ſcanty view,
Each for himſelf ſelects, peculiar parts
Of Nature, what the ſtandard fix'd by Heav'n
Within his breaſt approves; acquiring thus
A partial beauty which becomes his lot,
A beauty which his eye may comprehend,
His hand may copy; leaving, O Supreme!
O thou whom none hath utter'd! leaving all
To thee that infinite conſummate form
Which the great pow'rs, the gods around thy throne
And neareſt to thy counſels, know with thee
For ever to have been, but who ſhe is
Or what her likeneſs know not. Man ſurveys
A narrower ſcene, where by the mix'd effect
Of things corporeal on his paſſive mind
He judgeth what is fair. Corporeal things
The mind of man impel with various pow'rs,
And various features to his eye diſcloſe,

The pow'rs which move his ſenſe with inſtant joy,
The features which attract his heart to love,
He marks, combines, repoſits. Other pow'rs
And features of the ſelfſame thing (unleſs
The beautous form, the creature of his mind
Requeſt their cloſe alliance) he o'erlooks
Forgotten, or with ſelf-beguiling zeal
Whene'er his paſſions mingle in the work
Half alters, half diſowns. The tribes of men
Thus from their diff'rent functions, and the ſhapes
Familiar to their eye, with art obtain,
Unconſcious of their purpoſe, yet with art
Obtain the Beauty fitting man to love,
Whoſe proud deſires from Nature's homely toil
Oft' turn away faſtidious, aſking ſtill
His mind's high aid to purify the form
From matter's groſs communion, to ſecure
For ever from the meddling hand of Change
Or rude Decay her features, and to add
Whatever ornaments may ſuit her mien
Where'er he finds them ſcatter'd thro' the paths
Of Nature or of Fortune; then he ſeats
Th' accompliſh'd image deep within his breaſt,
Reviews it, and accounts it good and fair.
Thus the one Beauty of the world entire,
The univerſal Venus, far beyond
The keeneſt effort of created eyes
And their moſt wide horizon dwells inthron'd

In ancient ſilence: at her footſtool ſtands
An altar burning with eternal fire
Unſully'd, unconſum'd. Here ev'ry hour,
Here ev'ry moment, in their turns arrive
Her offspring, an innumerable band
Of ſiſters, comely all, but diff'ring far
In age, in ſtature, and expreſſive mien,
More than bright Helen from her new-born babe.
To this maternal ſhrine in turns they come,
Each with her ſacred lamp, that from the ſource
Of living flame which here immortal flows
Their portions of its luſtre they may draw
For days, or months, or years, for ages ſome,
As their great parent's diſcipline requires;
Then to their ſev'ral manſions they depart,
In ſtars, in planets, thro' the unknown ſhores
Of yon' ethereal ocean. Who can tell
Ev'n on the ſurface of this rolling earth
How many make abode? The fields, the groves,
The winding rivers, and the azure main,
Are render'd ſolemn by their frequent feet,
Their rites ſublime. There each her deſtin'd home
Informs with that pure radiance from the ſkies
Brought down, and ſhines thro'out her little ſphere
Exulting. Straight as travellers by night
Turn toward a diſtant flame, ſo ſome fit eye
Among the various tenants of the ſcene
Diſcerns the heaven-born phantom ſeated there,

And owns her charms: hence the wide univerſe
Thro' all the ſeaſons of revolving worlds
Bears witneſs with its people, gods and men,
To Beauty's bliſsful pow'r, and with the voice
Of grateful admiration ſtill reſounds;
That voice to which is Beauty's frame divine
As is the cunning of the maſter's hand
To the ſweet accent of the well-tun'd lyre.
Genius of ancient Greece! whoſe faithful ſteps
Have led us to theſe awful ſolitudes
Of Nature and of Science; Nurſe rever'd
Of gen'rous counſels and heroick deeds!
O let ſome portion of thy matchleſs praiſe
Dwell in my breaſt, and teach me to adorn
This unattempted theme! Nor be my thoughts
Preſumpt'ous counted if amid the calm
Which Heſper ſheds along the vernal heav'n,
If I from vulgar Superſtition's walk
Impatient ſteal, and from th' unſeemly rites
Of ſplendid Adulation, to attend
With hymns thy preſence in the ſylvan ſhade,
By their malignant footſteps unprofan'd,
Come, O renowned Pow'r! thy glowing mien
Such, and ſo elevated all thy form,
As when the great barbarick lord, again
And yet again diminiſh'd, hid his face
Among the herd of ſatraps and of kings,
And at the lightning of thy lifted ſpear

Crouch'd like a ſlave. Bring all thy martial ſpoils,
Thy palms, thy laurels, thy triumphal ſongs,
Thy ſmiling band of arts, thy godlike fires
Of civil wiſdom, thy unconquer'd youth,
After ſome glorious day rejoicing round
Their new-erected trophy. Guide my feet
Thro' fair Lyceum's walk, the olive ſhades
Of Academus, and the ſacred vale
Haunted by ſteps divine, where once beneath
That ever-living platane's ample boughs
Iliſſus, by Socratick ſounds detain'd
On his neglected urn attentive lay,
While Boreas ling'ring on the neighb'ring ſteep
With beauteous Orithyia his love-tale
In ſilent awe ſuſpended: there let me
With blameleſs hand from thy unenvious fields
Tranſplant ſome living bloſſoms to adorn
My native clime, while far beyond the meed
Of Fancy's toil aſpiring I unlock
The ſprings of ancient wiſdom, while I add
(What cannot be disjoin'd from Beauty's praiſe)
Thy name and native dreſs, thy works belov'd
And honour'd, while to my compatriot youth
I point the great example of thy ſons,
And tune to Attick themes the Britiſh lyre.

END OF BOOK FIRST.

THE

PLEASURES OF IMAGINATION.

BOOK II.

THE ARGUMENT.

INTRODUCTION to this more difficult part of the subject. Of truth and its three classes, matter of fact, experimental or scientifical truth, (contradistinguished from opinion) and universal truth; which last is either metaphysical or geometrical, either purely intellectual or perfectly abstracted. On the power of discerning truth depends that of acting with the view of an end, a circumstance essential to virtue. Of virtue, considered in the Divine Mind as a perpetual and universal beneficence. Of human virtue, considered as a system of particular sentiments and actions, suitable to the design of Providence and the condition of man, to whom it constitutes the chief good and the first beauty. Of vice and its origin. Of ridicule; its general nature and final cause. Of the passions, particularly of those which relate to evil natural or moral, and which are generally accounted painful, though not always unattended with Pleasure.

THUS far of Beauty and the pleasing forms
Which man's untutor'd fancy from the scenes
Imperfect of this ever-changing world
Creates and views enamour'd. Now my song
Severer themes demand, mysterious truth,
And virtue, sovran good; the spells, the trains,
The progeny of Error; the dread sway
Of Passion, and whatever hidden stores
From her own lofty deeds and from herself
The mind acquires. Severer argument,
Not less attractive nor deserving less
A constant ear: for what are all the forms
Educ'd by fancy from corporeal things,
Greatness, or pomp, or symmetry of parts?

Not tending to the heart ſoon feeble grows,
As the blunt arrow 'gainſt the knotty trunk,
Their impulſe on the ſenſe, while the pall'd eye
Expects in vain its tribute, aſks in vain
Where are the ornaments it once admir'd?
Not ſo the moral ſpecies, nor the pow'rs,
Of paſſion and of thought. Th' ambitious mind
With objects boundleſs as her own deſires
Can there converſe: by theſe unfading forms
Touch'd and awaken'd ſtill, with eager act
She bends each nerve, and meditates well-pleas'd
Her gifts, her godlike fortune. Such the ſcenes
Now op'ning round us: may the deſtin'd Verſe
Maintain its equal tenour, tho' in tracks
Obſcure and ard'ous! may the Source of Light,
All-preſent, all-ſufficient, guide our ſteps
Thro' ev'ry maze! and whom in childiſh years
From the loud throng, the beaten paths of wealth
And pow'r, thou didſt apart ſend forth to ſpeak
In tuneful words concerning higheſt things,
Him ſtill do thou, O Father! at thoſe hours
Of penſive freedom, when the human ſoul
Shuts out the rumour of the world, him ſtill
Touch thou with ſecret leſſons; call thou back
Each erring thought, and let the yielding ſtrains
From his full boſom like a welcome rill
Spontaneous from its healthy fountain flow!
But from what name, what favourable ſign,
What heav'nly auſpice, rather ſhall I date

My perilous excurſion than from truth,
That neareſt inmate of the human ſoul,
Eſtrang'd from whom the countenance divine
Of man disfigur'd and diſhonour'd, ſinks
Among inferior things? for to the brutes
Perception and the tranſient boons of ſenſe
Hath Fate imparted, but to man alone
Of ſublunary beings was it giv'n
Each fleeting impulſe on the ſenſual pow'rs
At leiſure to review, with equal eye
To ſcan the paſſion of the ſtricken nerve,
Or the vague object ſtriking, to conduct
From ſenſe, the portal turbulent and loud,
Into the mind's wide palace one by one
The frequent, preſſing, fluctuating, forms,
And queſtion and compare them. Thus he learns
Their birth and fortunes, how ally'd they haunt
The avenues of ſenſe, what laws direct
Their union, and what various diſcords riſe
Or fix'd or caſual; which when his clear thought
Retains, and when his faithful words expreſs,
That living image of th' external ſcene,
As in a poliſh'd mirror held to view,
Is truth; where'er it varies from the ſhape
And hue of its exemplar, in that part
Dim error lurks. Moreover, from without
When oft the ſame ſociety of forms
In the ſame order have approach'd his mind,

He deigns no more their ſteps with curious heed
To trace ; no more their features or their garb
He now examines, but of them and their
Condition, as with ſome diviner's tongue,
Affirms what Heav'n in ev'ry diſtant place
Thro' ev'ry future ſeaſon will decree ;
This too is truth : where'er his prudent lips
Wait till experience diligent and ſlow
Has authoris'd their ſentence, this is truth ;
A ſecond higher kind ; the parent this
Of ſcience, or the lofty pow'r herſelf,
Science herſelf, on whom the wants and cares
Of ſocial life depend, the ſubſtitute
Of God's own wiſdom in this toilſome world,
The providence of man. Yet oft' in vain
To earn her aid with fix'd and anxious eye
He looks on Nature's and on Fortune's courſe,
Too much in vain ; his duller viſual ray
The ſtillneſs and the perſevering acts
Of Nature oft' elude, and Fortune oft'
With ſtep fantaſtick from her wonted walk
Turns into mazes dim : his ſight is foil'd,
And the crude ſentence of his falt'ring tongue
Is but Opinion's verdict half believ'd,
And prone to change. Here thou who feelſt thine ear
Congenial to my lyre's profounder tone
Pauſe and be watchful. Hitherto the ſtores
Which feed thy mind and exerciſe her pow'rs
Partake the reliſh of their native ſoil,

Their parent earth: but know a nobler dow'r
Her ſire at birth decreed her, purer gifts
From his own treaſure, forms which never deign'd
In eyes or ears to dwell within the ſenſe
Of earthly organs, but ſublime were plac'd
In his eſſential reaſon, leading there
That vaſt ideal hoſt which all his works
Thro' endleſs ages never will reveal.
Thus then endow'd the feeble creature man,
The ſlave of hunger and the prey of Death,
Even now, even here, in earth's dim priſon bound,
The language of intelligence divine
Attains, repeating oft' concerning one
And many, paſt and preſent, parts and whole,
Thoſe ſovran dictates which in fartheſt heav'n,
Where no orb rolls, Eternity's fix'd ear
Hears from coeval truth, when Chance nor Change,
Nature's loud progeny, nor Nature's ſelf,
Dares intermeddle or approach her throne.
Ere long o'er this corporeal world he learns,
T' extend her ſway, while calling from the deep,
From earth and air, their multitudes untold
Of figures and of motions round his walk,
For each wide family ſome ſingle birth
He ſets in view, th' impartial type of all
Its brethren, ſuff'ring it to claim beyond
Their common heritage no private gift,
No proper fortune. Then whate'er his eye
In this diſcerns his bold unerring tongue

Pronounceth of her kindred without bound,
Without condition. Such the riſe of forms
Sequeſter'd far from ſenſe, and ev'ry ſpot
Peculiar in the realms of ſpace or time;
Such is the throne which man for Truth amid
The paths of mutability hath built
Secure, unſhaken, ſtill, and whence he views
In matter's mould'ring ſtructures the pure forms
Of triangle or circle, cube or cone,
Impaſſive all, whoſe attributes nor Force
Nor Fate can alter: there he firſt conceives
True being and an intellectual world,
The ſame this hour and ever; thence he deems
Of his own lot above the painted ſhapes
That fleeting move o'er this terreſtrial ſcene,
Looks up, beyond the adamantine gates
Of death expatiates, as his birthright claims
Inheritance in all the works of God,
Prepares for endleſs time his plan of life,
And counts the univerſe itſelf his home.
Whence alſo but from truth, the light of minds,
Is human fortune gladden'd with the rays
Of virtue? with the moral colours thrown
On ev'ry walk of this our ſocial ſcene,
Adorning for the eye of gods and men
The paſſions, actions, habitudes of life,
And rend'ring earth like heav'n, a ſacred place
Where Love and Praiſe may take delight to dwell?
Let none with heedleſs tongue from Truth disjoin

The reign of Virtue. Ere the dayſpring flow'd
Like ſiſters link'd in Concord's golden chain
They ſtood before the great Eternal Mind,
Their common parent, and by him were both
Sent forth among his creatures hand in hand,
Inſeparably join'd; nor e'er did Truth
Find an apt ear to liſten to her lore
Which knew not Virtue's voice; nor ſave where
Majeſtick words are heard and underſtood [Truth's
Doth Virtue deign t'inhabit. Go, inquire
Of Nature, not among Tartarean rocks,
Whither the hungry vulture with its prey
Returns, not where the lion's ſullen roar
At noon reſounds along the lonely banks
Of ancient Tigris, but her gentler ſcenes,
The dovecote and the ſhepherd's fold at morn
Conſult; or by the meadow's fragrant hedge,
In ſpring-time when the woodlands firſt are green,
Attend the linnet ſinging to his mate
Couch'd o'er their tender young. To this fond care
Thou doſt not Virtue's honourable name
Attribute; wherefore, ſave that not one gleam
Of truth did e'er diſcover to themſelves
Their little hearts, to teach them by th' effects
Of that parental love the love itſelf
To judge, and meaſure its officious deeds?
But man, whoſe eyelids Truth has fill'd with day,
Diſcerns how ſkilfully to bounteous ends

His wise affections move, with free accord
Adopts their guidance, yields himself secure
To Nature's prudent impulse, and converts
Instinct to duty and to sacred law:
Hence right and fit on earth, while thus to man
Th' Almighty Legislator hath explain'd
The springs of action fix'd within his breast,
Hath giv'n him pow'r to slacken or restrain
Their effort, and hath shewn him how they join
Their partial movements with the master-wheel
Of the great world, and serve that sacred end
Which he th' Unerring Reason keeps in view.
For (if a mortal tongue may speak of him
And his dread ways) ev'n as his boundless eye
Connecting ev'ry form and ev'ry change
Beholds the perfect beauty, so his will
Thro' ev'ry hour producing good to all
The family of creatures is itself
The perfect virtue. Let the grateful swain
Remember this as oft' with joy and praise
He looks upon the falling dews which clothe
His lawns with verdure, and the tender seed
Nourish within his furrows; when between
Dead seas and burning skies, where long unmov'd
The bark had languish'd, now a rustling gale
Lifts o'er the fickle waves the dancing prow,
Let the glad pilot bursting out in thanks
Remember this, lest blind o'erweening pride
Pollute their off'rings, lest their selfish heart

Say to the heav'nly Ruler "At our call
" Relents thy pow'r; by us thy arm is mov'd."
Fools! who of God as of each other deem,
Who his invariable acts deduce
From ſudden counſels tranſient as their own,
Nor farther of his bounty than th' event,
Which haply meets their loud and eager pray'r,
Acknowledge, nor beyond the drop minute,
Which haply they have taſted, heed the ſource
That flows for all, the fountain of his love,
Which from the ſummit where he ſits inthron'd
Pours health and joy, unfailing ſtreams, thro'out
The ſpacious region flouriſhing in view,
The goodly work of his eternal day,
His own fair univerſe, on which alone
His counſels fix, and whence alone his will
Aſſumes her ſtrong direction. Such is now
His ſovran purpoſe, ſuch it was before
All multitude of years: for his right arm
Was never idle; his beſtowing love
Knew no beginning; was not as a change
Of mood that woke at laſt and ſtarted up
After a deep and ſolitary ſloth
Of boundleſs ages: no; he now is good;
He ever was. The feet of hoary Time
Thro' their eternal courſe have travell'd o'er
No ſpeechleſs lifeleſs deſert, but thro' ſcenes
Cheerful with bounty ſtill, among a pomp
Of worlds for gladneſs round the Maker's throne

Loud ſhouting, or in many dialects
Of hope and filial truſt imploring thence
The fortunes of their people, where ſo fix'd
Were all the dates of being, ſo diſpos'd
To ev'ry living ſoul of ev'ry kind
The field of motion and the hour of reſt,
That each the gen'ral happineſs might ſerve,
And by the diſcipline of laws divine
Convinc'd of folly or chaſtiz'd from guilt
Each might at length be happy. What remains
Shall be like what is paſs'd, but fairer ſtill,
And ſtill increaſing in the godlike gifts
Of life and truth. The ſame paternal hand
From the mute ſhellfiſh gaſping on the ſhore
To men, to angels, to celeſtial minds,
Will ever lead the generations on
Thro' higher ſcenes of being, while ſupply'd
From day to day by his enliv'ning breath
Inferior orders in ſucceſſion riſe
To fill the void below. As flame aſcends,
As vapours to the earth in ſhow'rs return,
As the pois'd ocean tow'rd th' attracting moon
Swells, and the ever liſt'ning planets charm'd
By the ſun's call their onward pace incline,
So all things which have life aſpire to God,
Exhauſtleſs fount of intellectual day,
Centre of ſouls! Nor doth the maſt'ring voice
Of Nature ceaſe within to prompt aright
Their ſteps, nor is the care of Heav'n withheld

From ſending to the toil external aid,
That in their ſtations all may perſevere
To climb th' aſcent of being, and approach
For ever nearer to the life divine.
But this eternal fabrick was not rais'd
For man's inſpection. Tho' to ſome be giv'n
To catch a tranſient viſionary glimpſe
Of that majeſtick ſcene which boundleſs pow'r
Prepares for perfect goodneſs, yet in vain
Would human life her faculties expand
T' imboſom ſuch an object, nor could e'er
Virtue or praiſe have touch'd the hearts of men
Had not the Sovran Guide thro' ev'ry ſtage
Of this their various journey pointed out
New hopes, new toils, which to their humble ſphere
Of ſight and ſtrength might ſuch importance hold
As doth the wide creation to his own:
Hence all the little charities of life,
With all their duties, hence that fav'rite palm
Of human will when duty is ſuffic'd,
And ſtill the lib'ral ſoul in ampler deeds
Would manifeſt herſelf, that ſacred ſign
Of her rever'd affinity to him
Whoſe bounties are his own, to whom none ſaid
"Create the wiſeſt, fulleſt, faireſt, world,
"And make its offſpring happy;" who intent
Some likeneſs of himſelf among his works
To view, hath pour'd into the human breaſt
A ray of knowledge and of love which guides

Earth's feeble race to act their Maker's part,
Self-judging, self-oblig'd, while from before
That godlike function the gigantick pow'r
Necessity, tho' wont to curb the force
Of Chaos and the savage elements,
Retires abash'd, as from a scene too high
For her brute tyranny, and with her bears
Her scorn'd followers Terror and base Awe,
Who blinds herself, and that ill-suited pair,
Obedience link'd with Hatred. Then the soul
Arises in her strength, and looking round
Her busy sphere, whatever work she views,
Whatever counsel, bearing any trace
Of her Creator's likeness, whether apt
To aid her fellows or preserve herself
In her superior functions unimpair'd,
Thither she turns exulting; that she claims
As her peculiar good; on that thro' all
The fickle seasons of the day she looks
With rev'rence still; to that as to a fence
Against affliction and the darts of pain
Her drooping hopes repair; and once oppos'd
To that all other pleasure, other wealth,
Vile as the dross upon the molten gold
Appears, and loathsome as the briny sea
To him who languishes with thirst and sighs
For some known fountain pure. For what can strive
With virtue? which of Nature's regions vast
Can in so many forms produce to sight

Such pow'rful beauty? beauty which the eye
Of Hatred cannot look upon ſecure,
Which Envy's ſelf contemplates, and is turn'd
Ere long to tenderneſs, to infant ſmiles,
Or tears of humbleſt love. Is aught ſo fair
In all the dewy landſcapes of the ſpring,
The ſummer's noontide groves, the purple eve
At harveſt-home, or in the froſty moon
Glitt'ring on ſome ſmooth ſea, is aught ſo fair
As virtuous friendſhip? as th' honour'd roof
Whither from higheſt heav'n immortal Love
His torch ethereal and his golden bow
Propitious brings, and there a temple holds
To whoſe unſpotted ſervice gladly vow'd
The ſocial band of parent, brother, child,
With ſmiles and ſweet diſcourſe and gentle deeds
Adore his pow'r? What gift of richeſt clime
E'er drew ſuch eager eyes, or prompted ſuch
Deep wiſhes, as the zeal that ſnatcheth back
From Slander's pois'nous tooth a foe's renown,
Or croſſeth danger in his lion walk
A rival's life to reſcue? as the young
Athenian warrior ſitting down in bonds
That his great father's body might not want
A peaceful, humble, tomb? the Roman wife
Teaching her lord how harmleſs was the wound
Of death? how impotent the tyrant's rage,
Who nothing more could threaten to afflict
Their faithful love? Or is there in th' abyſs,

Is there among the adamantine ſpheres
Wheeling unſhaken thro' the boundleſs void
Aught that with half ſuch majeſty can fill
The human boſom as when Brutus roſe
Refulgent from the ſtroke of Cæſar's fate
Amid the crowd of patriots, and his arm
Aloft extending, like eternal Jove
When guilt brings down the thunder, call'd aloud
On Tully's name, and ſhook the crimſon ſword
Of juſtice in his rapt aſtoniſh'd eye,
And bad the father of his country Hail!
For lo the tyrant proſtrate on the duſt,
And Rome again is free? Thus thro' the paths
Of human life, in various pomp array'd,
Walks the wiſe daughter of the Judge of Heav'n,
Fair Virtue! from her Father's throne ſupreme
Sent down to utter laws ſuch as on earth
Moſt apt he knew, moſt pow'rful, to promote
The weal of all his works, the gracious end
Of his dread empire. And tho' haply man's
Obſcurer ſight ſo far beyond himſelf
And the brief labours of his little home
Extends not, yet by the bright preſence won
Of this divine inſtructreſs, to her ſway
Pleas'd he aſſents, nor heeds the diſtant goal
To which her voice conducts him. Thus hath God,
Still looking tow'rd his own high purpoſe, fix'd
The virtues of his creatures, thus he rules
The parent's fondneſs and the patriot's zeal,

Thus the warm ſenſe of honour and of ſhame,
The vows of gratitude, the faith of love,
And all the comely intercourſe of praiſe,
The joy of human life, the earthly heav'n.
How far unlike them muſt the lot of guilt
Be found! or what terreſtrial wo can match
The ſelf-convicted boſom which hath wrought
The bane of others, or enſlav'd itſelf
With ſhackles vile? Not poiſon nor ſharp fire,
Nor the worſt pangs that ever monkiſh hate
Suggeſted, or deſpotick Rage impos'd,
Were at that ſeaſon an unwiſh'd exchange,
When the ſoul loathes herſelf, when flying thence
To crowds on ev'ry brow ſhe ſees portray'd
Fell demons, Hate or Scorn, which drive her back
To ſolitude, her Judge's voice divine
To hear in ſecret, haply ſounding thro'
The troubled dreams of midnight, and ſtill, ſtill
Demanding for his violated laws
Fit recompenſe, or charging her own tongue
To ſpeak th' award of juſtice on herſelf;
For well ſhe knows what faithful hints within
Were whiſper'd to beware the lying forms
Which turn'd her footſteps from the ſafer way,
What cautions to ſuſpect their painted dreſs,
And look with ſteady eyelid on their ſmiles,
Their frowns, their tears. In vain: the dazzling hues
Of Fancy and Opinion's eager voice

Too much prevail'd ; for mortals tread the path
In which Opinion ſays they follow good
Or fly from evil ; and Opinion gives
Report of good or evil as the ſcene
Was drawn by Fancy, pleaſing or deform'd :
Thus her report can never there be true
Where fancy cheats the intellectual eye
With glaring colours and diſtorted lines.
Is there a man to whom the name of death
Brings terror's ghaſtly pageants conjur'd up
Before him, deathbed groans and diſmal vows,
And the frail ſoul plung'd headlong from the brink
Of life and daylight down the gloomy air
An unknown depth to gulfs of tort'ring fire
Unviſited by mercy ? then what hand
Can ſnatch this dreamer from the fatal toils
Which Fancy and Opinion thus conſpire
To twine around his heart ? or who ſhall huſh
Their clamour when they tell him that to die,
To riſk thoſe horrors, is a direr curſe
Than baſeſt life can bring ? Tho' Love with pray'rs
Moſt tender, with Affliction's ſacred tears,
Beſeech his aid, tho' Gratitude and Faith
Condemn each ſtep which loiters, yet let none
Make anſwer for him that if any frown
Of danger thwart his path he will not ſtay
Content, and be a wretch to be ſecure.
Here vice begins then : at the gate of life,
Ere the young multitude to diverſe roads

Part, like fond pilgrims on a journey unknown,
Sits Fancy, deep enchantreſs ! and to each
With kind maternal looks preſents her bowl,
A potent bev'rage. Heedleſs they comply,
Till the whole ſoul from that myſterious draught
Is ting'd, and ev'ry tranſient thought imbibes
Of gladneſs or diſguſt, deſire or fear,
One homebred colour, which not all the lights
Of ſcience e'er ſhall change, not all the ſtorms
Of adverſe fortune waſh away, nor yet
The robe of pureſt virtue quite conceal.
Thence on they paſs, where meeting frequent ſhapes
Of good and evil, cunning phantoms apt
To fire or freeze the breaſt, with them they join
In dang'rous parley, liſt'ning oft', and oft'
Gazing with reckleſs paſſion, while its garb
The ſpectre heightens, and its pompous tale
Repeats with ſome new circumſtance to ſuit
That early tincture of the hearer's ſoul.
And ſhould the guardian Reaſon but for one
Short moment yield to this illuſive ſcene
His ear and eye, th' intoxicating charm
Involves him, till no longer he diſcerns,
Or only guides to err. Then revel forth
A furious band that ſpurn him from the throne,
And all his uproar : hence Ambition climbs
With ſliding feet and hands impure to graſp
Thoſe ſolemn toys which glitter in his view
On Fortune's rugged ſteep ; hence pale Revenge

Unſheathes her murd'rous dagger: Rapine hence,
And envious Luſt, by venal Fraud upborne,
Surmount the rev'rend barrier of the laws,
Which kept them from their prey: hence all the crimes
That e'er defil'd the earth, and all the plagues
That follow them for vengeance, in the guiſe
Of honour, ſafety, pleaſure, eaſe, or pomp,
Stole firſt into the fond believing mind.
 Yet not by Fancy's witchcraft on the brain
Are always the tumult'ous paſſions driv'n
To guilty deeds, nor Reaſon bound in chains
That Vice alone may lord it: oft' adorn'd
With motley pageants Folly mounts his throne,
And plays her idiot anticks like a queen.
A thouſand garbs ſhe wears, a thouſand ways
She whirls her giddy empire.—Lo! thus far
With bold adventure to the Mantuan lyre
I ſing for contemplation link'd with love
A penſive theme: now haply ſhould my ſong
Unbend that ſerious countenance, and learn
Thalia's tripping gait, her ſhrill-ton'd voice,
Her wiles familiar, whether ſcorn ſhe darts
In wanton ambuſh from her lip or eye,
Or whether with a ſad diſguiſe of care
O'ermantling her gay brow ſhe acts in ſport
The deeds of Folly, and from all ſides round
Calls forth impetuous Laughter's gay rebuke.
Her province. But thro' ev'ry comick ſcene
To lead my Muſe with her light pencil arm'd,

Thro' ev'ry ſwift occaſion which the hand
Of Laughter points at when the mirthful ſting
Diſtends her lab'ring ſides and chokes her tongue,
Were endleſs as to ſound each grating note
With which the rooks and chatt'ring daws, and grave
Unwieldly inmates of the village pond,
The changing ſeaſons of the ſky proclaim
Sun, cloud, or ſhow'r. Suffice it to have ſaid
Where'er the pow'r of Ridicule diſplays
Her quaint-ey'd viſage ſome incongr'ous form,
Some ſtubborn diſſonance of things combin'd,
Strikes on her quick perception, whether Pomp,
Or Praiſe, or Beauty, be dragg'd in and ſhewn
Where ſordid faſhions, where ignoble deeds,
Where foul Deformity, is wont to dwell,
Or whether theſe with ſhrewd and wayward ſpite
Invade reſplendent Pomp's imperious mien,
The charms of Beauty or the boaſt of Praiſe.
   Aſk we for what fair end th' Almighty Sire
In mortal boſoms ſtirs this gay contempt,
Theſe grateful pangs of laughter, from diſguſt
Educing pleaſure? Wherefore but to aid
The tardy ſteps of Reaſon, and at once
By this prompt impulſe urge us to depreſs
Wild Folly's aims? for tho' the ſober light
Of Truth ſlow dawning on the watchful mind
At length unfolds thro' many a ſubtle tie
How theſe uncouth diſorders end at laſt

In publick evil, yet benignant Heav'n,
Conſcious how dim the dawn of truth appears
To thouſands, conſcious what a ſcanty pauſe
From labour and from care the wider lot
Of humble life affords for ſtudious thought
To ſcan the maze of Nature, therefore ſtamp'd
Theſe glaring ſcenes with characters of ſcorn
As broad as obvious, to the paſſing clown
As to the letter'd ſage's curious eye.
But other evils o'er the ſteps of man
Thro' all his walks impend, againſt whoſe might
The ſlender darts of laughter nought avail;
A trivial warfare. Some like cruel guards
On Nature's ever-moving throne attend,
With miſchief arm'd for him whoe'er ſhall thwart
The path of her inexorable wheels,
While ſhe purſues the work that muſt be done
Thro' ocean, earth, and air: hence frequent forms
Of wo, the merchant with his wealthy bark
Bury'd by daſhing waves, the traveller
Pierc'd by the pointed lightning in his haſte,
And the poor huſbandman with folded arms
Surveying his loſt labours and a heap
Of blaſted chaff, the product of the field,
Whence he expected bread. But worſe than theſe
I deem, far worſe, that other race of ills
Which humankind rear up among themſelves,
That horrid offspring which miſgovern'd Will
Bears to fantaſtick Error; Vices, Crimes,

Furies that curſe the earth, and make the blows,
The heavieſt blows, of Nature's innocent hand
Seem ſport; which are indeed but as the care
Of a wiſe parent, who ſolicits good
To all her houſe, tho' haply at the price
Of tears, and froward wailing, and reproach,
From ſome unthinking child, whom not the leſs
Its mother deſtines to be happy ſtill.
These ſources then of pain, this double lot
Of evil in th' inheritance of man,
Requir'd for his protection no ſlight force,
No careleſs watch, and therefore was his breaſt
Fenc'd round with paſſions quick to be alarm'd,
Or ſtubborn to oppoſe; with fear more ſwift
Than beacons catching flame from hill to hill
Where armies land, with anger uncontroll'd
As the young lion bounding on his prey,
With ſorrow that locks up the ſtruggling heart,
And ſhame that overcaſts the drooping eye
As with a cloud of lightning. Theſe the part
Perform of eager monitors, and goad
The ſoul more ſharply than with points of ſteel
Her enemies to ſhun or to reſiſt:
And as thoſe paſſions that converſe with good
Are good themſelves, as hope, and love, and joy,
Among the faireſt and the ſweeteſt boons
Of life we rightly count, ſo theſe which guard
Againſt invading evil ſtill excite
Some pain, ſome tumult; theſe within the mind

Too oft' admitted or too long retain'd
Shock their frail ſeat, and by their uncurb'd rage
To ſavages more fell than Libya breeds
Transform themſelves, till human thought becomes
A gloomy ruin, haunt of ſhapes unbleſs'd,
Of ſelf-tormenting fiends, Horror, Deſpair,
Hatred, and wicked Envy, foes to all
The works of Nature and the gifts of heav'n.
But when thro' blameleſs paths to righteous ends
Thoſe keener paſſions urge th' awaken'd ſoul,
I would not as ungracious violence
Their ſway deſcribe, nor from their free career
The fellowſhip of Pleaſure quite exclude:
For what can render to the ſelf-approv'd
Their temper void of comfort tho' in pain?
Who knows not with what majeſty divine
The forms of Truth and Juſtice to the mind
Appear, ennobling oft' the ſharpeſt wo
With triumph and rejoicing? Who that bears
A human boſom hath not often felt
How dear are all thoſe ties which bind our race
In gentleneſs together, and how ſweet
Their force, let Fortune's wayward hand the while
Be kind or cruel? Aſk the faithful youth
Why the cold urn of her whom long he lov'd
So often fills his arms, ſo often draws
His lonely footſteps ſilent and unſeen
To pay the mournful tribute of his tears?
Oh! he will tell thee that the wealth of worlds

Should ne'er ſeduce his boſom to forego
Thoſe ſacred hours when, ſtealing from the noiſe
Of care and envy, ſweet remembrance ſooths
With virtue's kindeſt looks his aking breaſt,
And turns his tears to rapture. Aſk the crowd
Which flies impatient from the village walk
To climb the neighb'ring cliffs when far below
The ſavage winds have hurl'd upon the coaſt
Some helpleſs bark, while holy Pity melts
The gen'ral eye, or Terror's icy hand
Smites their diſtorted limbs and horrent hair,
While ev'ry mother cloſer to her breaſt
Catcheth her child, and pointing where the waves
Foam thro' the ſhatter'd veſſel, ſhrieks aloud
As one poor wretch who ſpreads his piteous arms
For ſuccour ſwallow'd by the roaring ſurge,
As now another daſh'd againſt the rock
Drops lifeleſs down. O! deemeſt thou indeed
No pleaſing influence here by Nature giv'n
To mutual terror and Compaſſion's tears?
No tender charm myſterious which attracts
O'er all that edge of pain the ſocial pow'rs
To this their proper action and their end?
Aſk thy own heart when at the midnight hour
Slow thro' that penſive gloom thy pauſing eye,
Led by the glimm'ring taper, moves around
The rev'rend volumes of the dead, the ſongs
Of Grecian bards, and records writ by Fame
For Grecian heroes, where the Sov'ran Pow'r

Of heav'n and earth surveys th' immortal page,
Ev'n as a father meditating all
The praises of his son, and bids the rest
Of mankind there the fairest model learn
Of their own nature, and the noblest deeds
Which yet the world hath seen : if then thy soul
Join in the lot of those diviner men,
Say, when the prospect darkens on thy view,
When sunk by many a wound heroick states
Mourn in the dust, and tremble at the frown
Of hard Ambition ; when the gen'rous band
Of youths who fought for freedom and their sires
Lie side by side in death ; when brutal Force
Usurps the throne of Justice, turns the pomp
Of guardian pow'r, the majesty of rule,
The sword, the laurel, and the purple robe,
To poor dishonest pageants, to adorn
A robber's walk, and glitter in the eyes
Of such as bow the knee ; when beauteous works,
Rewards of virtue, sculptur'd forms, which deck'd
With more than human grace the warrior's arch
Or patriot's tomb now victims to appease
Tyrannick Envy strew the common path
With awful ruins ; when the Muses haunt,
The marble Porch where Wisdom wont to talk
With Socrates or Tully, hears no more
Save the hoarse jargon of contentious monks,
Or female superstition's midnight pray'r ;
When ruthless Havock from the hand of Time,

Tears the deſtroying ſithe, with ſurer ſtroke
To mow the monuments of glory down,
Till Deſolation o'er the graſs-grown ſtreet
Expands her raven wings, and from the gate
Where ſenates once the weal of nations plann'd
Hiſſeth the gliding ſnake thro' hoary weeds
That claſp the mould'ring column: thus when all
The widely mournful ſcene is fix'd within
Thy throbbing boſom, when the patriot's tear
Starts from thine eye, and thy extended arm
In fancy hurls the thunderbolt of Jove
To fire the impious wreath on Philip's brow,
Or daſh Octavius from the trophy'd car,
Say, doth thy ſecret ſoul repine to taſte
The big diſtreſs? or wouldſt thou then exchange
Thoſe heart-ennobling ſorrows for the lot
Of him who ſits amid the gaudy herd
Of ſilent flatt'rers bending to his nod,
And o'er them like a giant caſts his eye,
And ſays within himſelf, "I am a king,
"And wherefore ſhould the clam'rous voice of Wo
"Intrude upon mine ear?" The dregs corrupt
Of barb'rous ages, that Circean draught
Of ſervitude and folly, have not yet,
Bleſs'd be th' Eternal Ruler of the world!
Yet have not ſo diſhonour'd, ſo deform'd
The native judgment of the human ſoul,
Nor ſo effac'd the image of her Sire.

THE

PLEASURES OF IMAGINATION.

BOOK III.

MDCCLXX.

WHAT tongue then may explain the various fate
Which reigns o'er earth? or who to mortal eyes
Illuſtrate this perplexing labyrinth
Of joy and wo thro' which the feet of man
Are doom'd to wander? That Eternal Mind,
From paſſions, wants, and envy, far eſtrang'd,
Who built the ſpacious univerſe, and deck'd
Each part ſo richly with whate'er pertains
To life, to health, to pleaſure, why bad he
The viper Evil creeping in pollute
The goodly ſcene, and with inſidious rage,
While the poor inmate looks around and ſmiles,
Dart her fell ſting with poiſon to his ſoul?
Hard is the queſtion, and from ancient days
Hath ſtill oppreſs'd with care the ſage's thought,
Hath drawn forth accents from the poet's lyre
Too ſad, too deeply plaintive: nor did e'er
Thoſe chiefs of humankind from whom the light
Of heav'nly truth firſt gleam'd on barb'rous lands
Forget this dreadful ſecret when they told
What wondrous things had to their favour'd eyes
And ears on cloudy mountain been reveal'd,
Or in deep cave by nimph or pow'r divine,
Portentous oft' and wild: yet one I know,

Could I the ſpeech of lawgivers aſſume,
One old and ſplendid tale I would record
With which the Muſe of Solon in ſweet ſtrains
Adorn'd this theme profound, and render'd all
Its darkneſs, all its terrors, bright as noon,
Or gentle as the golden ſtar of eve.
Who knows not Solon? laſt and wiſeſt far
Of thoſe whom Greece triumphant in the height
Of glory ſtyl'd her Fathers? him whoſe voice
Thro' Athens huſh'd the ſtorm of civil wrath,
Taught envious Want and cruel Wealth to join
In friendſhip, and with ſweet compulſion tam'd
Minerva's eager people to his laws,
Which their own goddeſs in his breaſt inſpir'd?
'Twas now the time when his heroick taſk
Seem'd but perform'd in vain, when ſooth'd by years
Of flatt'ring ſervice the fond multitude
Hung with their ſudden counſels on the breath
Of great Piſiſtratus, that chief renown'd
Whom Hermes and th' Idalian queen had train'd
Ev'n from his birth to ev'ry pow'rful art
Of pleaſing and perſuading, from whoſe lips
Flow'd eloquence which like the vows of love
Could ſteal away ſuſpicion from the hearts
Of all who liſten'd. Thus from day to day
He won the gen'ral ſuff'rage, and beheld
Each rival overſhadow'd and depreſs'd
Beneath his ampler ſtate, yet oft' complain'd

As one leſs kindly treated who had hop'd
To merit favour, but ſubmits perforce
To find another's ſervices preferr'd,
Nor yet relaxeth aught of faith or zeal.
Then tales were ſcatter'd of his envious foes,
Of ſnares that watch'd his fame, of daggers aim'd
Againſt his life. At laſt with trembling limbs,
His hair diffus'd and wild, his garments looſe,
And ſtain'd with blood from ſelf-inflicted wounds,
He burſt into the publick place, as there,
There only, were his refuge, and declar'd
In broken words, with ſighs of deep regret,
The mortal danger he had ſcarce repell'd.
Fir'd with his tragick tale th' indignant crowd
To guard his ſteps forthwith a menial band
Array'd beneath his eye for deeds of war
Decree: O ſtill too lib'ral of their truſt
And oft betray'd by over-grateful love
The gen'rous people! Now behold him fenc'd
By mercenary weapons, like a king
Forth iſſuing from the city gate at eve
To ſeek his rural manſion, and with pomp
Crowding the publick road. The ſwain ſtops ſhort,
And ſighs, th' officious townſmen ſtand at gaze,
And ſhrinking give the ſullen pageant room.
Yet not the leſs obſequious was his brow,
Nor leſs profuſe of courteous words his tongue,
Of gracious gifts his hand, the while by ſtealth,
Like a ſmall torrent fed with ev'ning ſhow'rs,

His train increas'd ; till at that fatal time,
Just as the publick eye with doubt and shame
Startled began to question what it saw,
Swift as the sound of earthquakes rush'd a voice
Thro' Athens that Pisistratus had fill'd
The rocky citadel with hostile arms,
Had barr'd the steep ascent, and sat within
Amid his hirelings meditating death
To all whose stubborn necks his yoke refus'd.
Where then was Solon ? After ten len long years
Of absence full of haste from foreign shores
The sage, the lawgiver, had now arriv'd,
Arriv'd, alas ! to see that Athens, that
Fair temple rais'd by him, and sacred call'd
To Liberty and Concord, now prophan'd
By savage hate, or sunk into a den
Of slaves who crouch beneath the master's scourge,
And deprecate his wrath and court his chains.
Yet did not the wise patriot's grief impede
His virtuous will, nor was his heart inclin'd
One moment with such womanlike distress
To view the transient storms of civil war
As thence to yield his country and her hopes
To all-devouring bondage. His bright helm,
Ev'n while the traitor's impious act is told,
He buckles on his hoary head, he girds
With mail his stooping breast, the shield, the spear,
He snatcheth, and with swift indignant strides

Th' aſſembled people ſeeks, proclaims aloud
It was no time for counſel, in their ſpears
Lay all their prudence now ; the tyrant yet
Was not ſo firmly ſeated on his throne
But that one ſhock of their united force
Would daſh him from the ſummit of his pride
Headlong and grov'lling in the duſt. What elſe
Can reaſſert the loſt Athenian name,
So cheaply to the laughter of the world
Betray'd, by guile beneath an infant's faith
So mock'd and ſcorn'd ? Away then ; Freedom now
And Safety dwell not but with fame in arms ;
Myſelf will ſhew you where their manſion lies,
And thro' the walks of danger or of death
Conduct you to them. While he ſpake thro' all
Their crowded ranks his quick ſagacious eye
He darted, where no cheerful voice was heard
Of ſocial daring, no ſtretch'd arm was ſeen
Haſt'ning their common taſk, but pale miſtruſt
rinkled each brow : they ſhook their heads and down
Their ſlack hands hung : cold ſighs and whiſper'd doubts
From breath to breath ſtole round. The ſage mean-time
Look'd ſpeechleſs on, while his big boſom heav'd
Struggling with ſhame and ſorrow, till at laſt
A tear broke forth ; and " O immortal Shades !
" O Theſeus !" he exclaim'd, " O Codrus ! where,
" Where are ye now ? behold for what ye toil'd
" Thro' life ! behold for whom ye choſe to die !"

No more he added, but with lonely ſteps
Weary and ſlow, his ſilver beard depreſs'd,
And his ſtern eye bent heedleſs on the ground,
Back to his ſilent dwelling he repair'd;
There o'er the gate his armour, as a man
Whom from the ſervice of the war his chief
Diſmiſſeth after no inglorious toil,
He fix'd in gen'ral view: one wiſhful look
He ſent unconſcious tow'rd the publick place
At parting, then beneath his quiet roof
Without a word, without a ſigh, retir'd.
 Scarce had the morrow's ſun his golden rays
From ſweet Hymettus darted o'er the fanes
Of Cecrops to the Salaminian ſhores
When lo! on Solon's threſhold met the feet
Of four Athenians, by the ſame ſad care
Conducted all, than whom the ſtate beheld
None nobler. Firſt came Megacles, the ſon
Of great Alcmeon, whom the Lydian king,
The mild unhappy Crœſus, in his days
Of glory had with coſtly gifts adorn'd,
Fair veſſels, ſplendid garments, tinctur'd webs,
And heaps of treaſur'd gold beyond the lot
Of many ſovrans, thus requiting well
That hoſpitable favour which erewhile
Alcmeon to his meſſengers had ſhewn,
Whom he with off'rings worthy of the god
Sent from his throne in Sardis to revere

Apollo's Delphick ſhrine. With Megacles
Approach'd his ſon, whom Agariſta bore,
The virtuous child of Cliſthenes, whoſe hand
Of Grecian ſceptres the moſt ancient far
In Sicyon ſway'd; but greater fame he drew
From arms controll'd by juſtice, from the love
Of the wiſe Muſes, and the unenvy'd wreath
Which glad Olympia gave; for thither once
His warlike ſteeds the hero led, and there
Contented thro' the tumult of the courſe
With ſkilful wheels. Then victor at the goal
Amid th' applauſes of aſſembled Greece
High on his car he ſtood, and wav'd his arm:
Silence enſu'd, when ſtraight the herald's voice
Was heard inviting ev'ry Grecian youth,
Whom Cliſthenes content might call his ſon,
To viſit ere twice thirty days were paſs'd
The towers of Sicyon. There the chief decreed
Within the circuit of the following year
To join at Hymen's altar hand in hand
With his fair daughter him among the gueſts
Whom worthieſt he ſhould deem. Forthwith from all
The bounds of Greece th' ambitious wooers came;
From rich Heſperia, from th' Illyrian ſhore,
Where Epidamnus over Adria's ſurge
Looks on the ſetting ſun, from thoſe brave tribes
Chaonian or Moloſſian whom the race
Of great Achilles governs, glorying ſtill
In Troy o'erthrown, from rough Ætolia, nurſe

Of men who firſt among the Greeks threw off
The yoke of kings, to commerce and to arms
Devoted, from Theſſalia's fertile meads,
Where flows Peneus near the lofty walls
Of Cranon old, from ſtrong Eretria, queen
Of all Eubœan cities, who ſublime
On the ſteep margin of Euripus views
Acroſs the tide the Marathonian plain,
Not yet the haunt of glory. Athens too,
Minerva's care, among her graceful ſons
Found equal lovers for the princely maid;
Nor was proud Argos wanting, nor the domes
Of ſacred Elis, nor th' Arcadian groves
That overſhade Alpheus, echoing oft'
Some ſhepherd's ſong. But thro' th' illuſtrious band
Was none who might with Megacles compare
In all the honours of unblemiſh'd youth.
His was the beauteous bride; and now their ſon,
Young Cliſthenes, betimes at Solon's gate
Stood anxious, leaning forward on the arm
Of his great ſire, with earneſt eyes that aſk'd
When the ſlow hinge would turn, with reſtleſs feet,
And cheeks now pale, now glowing; for his heart
Throbb'd, full of burſting paſſions, anger, grief,
With ſcorn imbitter'd, by the gen'rous boy
Scarce underſtood, but which, like noble ſeeds,
Are deſtin'd for his country and himſelf
In riper years to bring forth fruits divine
Of liberty and glory. Next appear'd

Two brave companions, whom one mother bore
To diff'rent lords, but whom the better ties
Of firm eſteem and friendſhip render'd more
Than brothers; firſt Miltiades, who drew
From godlike Æacus his ancient line,
That Æacus whoſe unimpeach'd renown
For ſanctity and juſtice won the lyre
Of elder bards to celebrate him thron'd
In Hades o'er the dead, where his decrees
The guilty ſoul within the burning gates
Of Tartarus compel, or ſend the good
T' inhabit with eternal health and peace
The vallies of Elyſium. From a ſtem
So ſacred ne'er could worthier ſcion ſpring
Than this Miltiades, whoſe aid ere long
The chiefs of Thrace, already on their ways
Sent by th' inſpir'd foreknowing maid who ſits
Upon the Delphick tripod, ſhall implore
To wield their ſceptre, and the rural wealth
Of fruitful Cherſoneſus to protect
With arms and laws: but nothing careful now
Save for his injur'd country, here he ſtands
In deep ſolicitude with Cimon join'd,
Unconſcious both what widely diff'rent lots
Await them, taught by Nature as they are
To know one common good, one common ill:
For Cimon not his valour, not his birth
Deriv'd from Codrus, not a thouſand gifts
Dealt round him with a wiſe benignant hand,

No, not th' Olympick olive, by himſelf
From his own brow transferr'd to ſooth the mind
Of this Piſiſtratus, can long preſerve
From the fell envy of the tyrant's ſons
And their aſſaſſin dagger. But if death
Obſcure upon his gentle ſteps attend,
Yet Fate an ample recompenſe prepares
In his victorious ſon, that other great
Miltiades who o'er the very throne
Of glory ſhall with Time's aſſiduous hand
In adamantine characters engrave
The name of Athens, and by Freedom arm'd
'Gainſt the gigantick pride of Aſia's king
Shall all th 'achievements of the heroes old
Surmount, of Hercules, of all who ſail'd
From Theſſaly with Jaſon, all who fought
For empire or for fame at Thebes or Troy.
  Such were the patriots who within the porch
Of Solon had aſſembled: but the gate
Now opens, and acroſs the ample floor
Straight they proceed into an open ſpace
Bright with the beams of morn, a verdant ſpot,
Where ſtands a rural altar pil'd with ſods
Cut from the graſſy turf, and girt with wreaths
Of branching palm. Here Solon's ſelf they found
Clad in a robe of purple pure, and deck'd
With leaves of olive on his rev'rend brow.
He bow'd before the altar, and o'er cakes
Of barley from two earthen veſſels pour'd

Of honey and of milk a plenteous ſtream,
Calling mean-time the Muſes to accept
His ſimple off'ring, by no victim ting'd
With blood, nor ſully'd by deſtroying fire,
But ſuch as for himſelf Apollo claims
In his own Delos, where his fav'rite haunt
Is thence the altar of the Pious nam'd.
Unſeen the gueſts drew near, and ſilent view'd
That worſhip, till the hero prieſt his eye
Turn'd tow'rd a ſeat on which prepar'd there lay
A branch of laurel; then his friends confeſs'd
Before him ſtood. Backward his ſtep he drew,
As loth that care or tumult ſhould approach
Thoſe early rites divine; but ſoon their looks
So anxious, and their hands held forth with ſuch
Deſponding geſture, bring him on perforce
To ſpeak to their affliction. "Are ye come,"
He cry'd, "to mourn with me this common ſhame?
"Or aſk ye ſome new effort which may break
"Our fetters? Know then of the publick cauſe
"Not for yon' traitor's cunning or his might
"Do I deſpair; nor could I wiſh from Jove
"Aught dearer than at this late hour of life
"As once by laws ſo now by ſtrenuous arms
"From impious violation to aſſert
"The rights our fathers left us. But, alas!
"What arms? or who ſhall wield them? Ye beheld
"Th' Athenian people. Many bitter days
"Muſt paſs, and many wounds from cruel Pride

"Be felt, ere yet their partial hearts find room
"For juſt reſentment, or their hands endure
"To ſmite this tyrant brood, ſo near to all
"Their hopes, ſo oft' admir'd, ſo long belov'd.
"That time will come however. Be it your's
"To watch its fair approach, and urge it on
"With honeſt prudence: me it ill beſeems
"Again to ſupplicate th' unwilling crowd
"To reſcue from a vile deceiver's hold
"That envy'd pow'r which once with eager zeal
"They offer'd to myſelf; nor can I plunge
"In counſels deep and various, nor prepare
"For diſtant wars, thus falt'ring as I tread
"On life's laſt verge, ere long to join the ſhades
"Of Minos and Lycurgus. But behold
"What care employs me now. My vows I pay
"To the ſweet Muſes, teachers of my youth,
"And ſolace of my age. If right I deem
"Of the ſtill voice that whiſpers at my heart
"Th' immortal Siſters have not quite withdrawn
"Their old harmonious influence. Let your tongues
"With ſacred ſilence favour what I ſpeak,
"And haply ſhall my faithful lips be taught
"T' unfold celeſtial counſels, which may arm
"As with impenetrable ſteel your breaſts
"For the long ſtrife before you, and repel
"The darts of adverſe Fate." He ſaid, and ſnatch'd
The laurel bough, and ſat in ſilence down,
Fix'd, wrapp'd in ſolemn muſing, full before

The ſun, who now from all his radiant orb
Drove the grey clouds, and pour'd his genial light
Upon the breaſt of Solon. Solon rais'd
Aloft the leafy rod, and thus began:
" Ye beauteous offspring of Olympian Jove
" And Memory divine, Pierian Maids!
" Hear me propitious. In the morn of life,
" When hope ſhone bright and all the proſpect ſmil'd,
" To your ſequeſter'd manſion oft' my ſteps
" Were turn'd, O Muſes! and within your gate
" My off'rings paid. Ye taught me then with ſtrains
" Of flowing harmony to ſoften War's
" Dire voice, or in fair colours that might charm
" The publick eye to clothe the form auſtere
" Of civil counſel. Now my feeble age
" Neglected, and ſupplanted of the hope
" On which it lean'd, yet ſinks not, but to you
" To your mild wiſdom, flies, refuge belov'd
" Of ſolitude and ſilence. Ye can teach
" The viſions of my bed whate'er the gods
" In the rude ages of the world inſpir'd,
" Or the firſt heroes acted; ye can make
" The morning light more gladſome to my ſenſe
" Than ever it appear'd to active youth
" Purſuing careleſs pleaſure; ye can give
" To this long leiſure, theſe unheeded hours
" A labour as ſublime as when the ſons
" Of Athens throng'd and ſpeechleſs round me ſtood

"To hear pronounc'd for all their future deeds
"The bounds of right and wrong. Celeſtial Pow'rs!
"I feel that ye are near me; and behold
"To meet your energy divine I bring
"A high and ſacred theme, not leſs than thoſe
"Which to th' eternal cuſtody of Fame
"Your lips intruſted, when of old ye deign'd
"With Orpheus or with Homer to frequent
"The groves of Hemus or the Chian ſhore.
"Ye know, harmonious Maids! (for what of all
"My various life was e'er from you eſtrang'd?)
"Oft' hath my ſolitary ſong to you
"Reveal'd that duteous pride which turn'd my ſteps
"To willing exile, earneſt to withdraw
"From envy and the diſappointed thirſt
"Of lucre, leſt the bold familiar ſtrife
"Which in the eye of Athens they upheld
"Againſt her legiſlator ſhould impair
"With trivial doubt the rev'rence of his laws:
"To Egypt therefore thro' th' Ægean iſles
"My courſe I ſteer'd, and by the banks of Nile
"Dwelt in Canopus: thence the hallow'd domes
"Of Sais, and the rites to Iſis paid,
"I ſought, and in her temple's ſilent courts
"Thro' many changing moons attentive heard
"The venerable Sonchis, while his tongue
"At morn or midnight the deep ſtory told
"Of her who repreſents whate'er has been;

"Or is, or ſhall be, whoſe myſterious veil
"No mortal hand hath ever yet remov'd,
"By him exhorted ſouthward to the walls
"Of On I paſs'd, the city of the Sun,
"The ever youthful god: 't was there amid
"His prieſts and ſages, who the livelong night
"Watch the dread movements of the ſtarry ſphere,
"Or who in wondrous fables half diſcloſe
"The ſecrets of the elements, it was there
"That great Pſenophis taught my raptur'd ears
"The fame of old Atlantis, of her chiefs,
"And her pure laws, the firſt which earth obey'd.
"Deep in my boſom ſunk the noble tale,
"And often while I liſten'd did my mind
"Foretel with what delight her own free lyre
"Should ſome time for an Attick audience raiſe
"Anew that lofty ſcene, and from their tombs
"Call forth thoſe ancient demigods to ſpeak
"Of juſtice and the hidden providence
"That walks among mankind. But yet mean-time
"The myſtick pomp of Ammon's gloomy ſons
"Became leſs pleaſing: with contempt I gaz'd
"On that tame garb and thoſe unvarying paths
"To which the double yoke of king and prieſt
"Had cramp'd the ſullen race. At laſt with hymns
"Invoking our own Pallas and the gods
"Of cheerful Greece, a glad farewell I gave
"To Egypt, and before the ſouthern wind
"Spread my full ſails. What climes I then ſurvey'd,

“ What fortunes I encounter'd in the realm
“ Of Crœſus, or upon the Cyprian ſhore,
“ The muſe who prompts my boſom doth not now
“ Conſent that I reveal. But when at length
“ Ten times the ſun returning from the ſouth
“ Had ſtrow'd with flow'rs the verdant earth, and fill'd
“ The groves with muſick, pleas'd I then beheld
“ The term of thoſe long errors drawing nigh.
“ Nor yet, I ſaid, will I ſit down within
“ The walls of Athens till my feet have trod
“ The Cretan ſoil, have pierc'd thoſe rev'rend haunts
“ Whence Law and civil Concord iſſu'd forth
“ As from their ancient home, and ſtill to Greece
“ Their wiſeſt loftieſt diſcipline proclaim.
“ Straight where Amniſus, mart of wealthy ſhips,
“ Appears beneath fam'd Gnoſſus and her tow'rs,
“ Like the fair handmaid of a ſtately queen,
“ I check'd my prow, and thence with eager ſteps
“ The city' of Minos enter'd. O ye Gods!
“ Who taught the leaders of the ſimpler time
“ By written words to curb the untow'rd will
“ Of mortals, how within that gen'rous iſle
“ Have ye the triumphs of your pow'r diſplay'd
“ Munificent! Thoſe ſplendid merchants, lords
“ Of traffick and the ſea, with what delight
“ I ſaw them at their publick meal, like ſons
“ Of the ſame houſehold, join the plainer ſort,
“ Whoſe wealth was only freedom! whence to theſe

“ Vile envy and to thoſe fantaſtick pride
“ Alike was ſtrange, but noble concord ſtill
“ Cheriſh'd the ſtrength untam'd, the ruſtick fai
“ Of their firſt fathers. Then the growing race
“ How pleaſing to behold them in their ſchools,
“ Their ſports, their labours, ever plac'd within
“ O ſhade of Minos! thy controlling eye?
“ Here was a docile band in tuneful tones
“ Thy laws pronouncing, or with lofty hymns
“ Praiſing the bounteous gods, or to preſerve
“ Their country's heroes from oblivious night
“ Reſounding what the Muſe inſpir'd of old:
“ There on the verge of manhood others met
“ In heavy armour thro' the heats of noon
“ To march, the rugged mountain's height to cli
“ With meaſur'd ſwiftneſs, from the hardbent bo
“ To ſend reſiſtleſs arrows to their mark,
“ Or for the fame of prowefs to contend,
“ Now wreſtling, now with fiſts and ſtaves oppos'
“ Now with the biting falchion, and the fence
“ Of brazen ſhields, while ſtill the warbling flute
“ Preſided o'er the combat, breathing ſtrains
“ Grave, ſolemn, ſoft, and changing headlong ſpi
“ To thoughtful reſolution cool and clear.
“ Such I beheld thoſe iſlanders renown'd,
“ So tutor'd from their birth to meet in war
“ Each bold invader, and in peace to guard
“ That living flame of rev'rence for their laws
“ Which nor the ſtorms of Fortune nor the flood,

"Of foreign wealth diffus'd o'er all the land
"Could quench or ſlacken. Firſt of human names
"In ev'ry Cretan's heart was Minos ſtill,
"And holieſt far of what the ſun ſurveys
"Thro' his whole courſe were thoſe primeval ſeats
"Which with religious ſooſteps he had taught
"Their ſires t' approach, the wild Dictean cave
"Where Jove was born, the ever verdant meads
"Of Ida, and the ſpacious grotto where
"His active youth he paſs'd, and where his throne
"Yet ſtands myſterious, whither Minos came
"Each ninth returning year the king of gods
"And mortals there in ſecret to conſult
"On juſtice, and the tables of his law
"T' inſcribe anew: oft' alſo with like zeal
"Great Rhea's manſion from the Gnoſſian gates
"Men viſit, not leſs oft' the antick ſane
"Built on that ſacred ſpot along the banks
"Of ſhady Theron where benignant Jove
"And his majeſtick conſort join'd their hands
"And ſpoke their nuptial vows. Alas! 'twas there
"That the dire fame of Athens ſunk in bonds
"I firſt receiv'd, what time an annual feaſt
"Had ſummon'd all the genial country round
"By ſacrifice and pomp to bring to mind
"That firſt great ſpouſal, while th' enamour'd youths
"And virgins with the prieſt before the ſhrine
"Obſerve the ſame pure ritual, and invoke
"The ſame glad omens. There among the crowd
"Of ſtrangers from thoſe naval cities drawn

" Which deck like gems the iſland's northern ſhore
" A merchant of Ægina I deſcry'd,
" My ancient hoſt; but forward as I ſprung
" To meet him he with dark dejected brow
" Stopp'd half averſe; and " O Athenian gueſt!"
" He ſaid, " art thou in Crete theſe joyful rites
" Partaking? Know thy laws are blotted out;
" Thy Country kneels before a tyrant's throne."
" He added names of men with hoſtile deeds
" Diſaſtrous, which obſcure and indiſtinct
" I heard, for while he ſpake my heart grew cold
" And my eyes dim; the altars and their train
" No more were preſent to me: how I far'd
" Or whither turn'd I know not, nor recall
" Aught of thoſe moments other than the ſenſe
" Of one who ſtruggles in oppreſſive ſleep,
" And from the toils of ſome diſtreſsful dream
" To break away, with palpitating heart,
" Weak limbs, and temples bath'd in deathlike dew,
" Makes many a painful effort. When at laſt
" The ſun and Nature's face again appear'd
" Not far I found me, where the publick path
" Winding thro' cypreſs groves and ſwelling meads
" From Gnoſſus to the cave of Jove aſcends:
" Heedleſs I follow'd on till ſoon the ſkirts
" Of Ida roſe before me, and the vault
" Wide-op'ning pierc'd the mountain's rocky ſide.
" Ent'ring within the threſhold on the ground
" I flung me, ſad, faint, overworn with toil.

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THE BEGINNING OF THE FOURTH BOOK OF THE

PLEASURES OF IMAGINATION.

MDCCLXX.

ONE effort more, one cheerful fally more,
Our deftin'd courfe will finifh; and in peace
Then for an off'ring facred to the pow'rs
Who lent us gracious guidance we will then
Infcribe a monument of deathlefs praife,
O my advent'rous Song! With fteady fpeed
Long haft thou, on an untry'd voyage bound,
Sail'd between earth and heav'n; haft now furvey'd
Stretch'd out beneath thee all the mazy tracks
Of paffion and opinion, like a wafte
Of fands, and flow'ry lawns, and tangling woods,
Where mortals roam bewilder'd; and haft now
Exulting foar'd among the worlds above,
Or hover'd near th' eternal gates of heav'n,
If haply the difcourfes of the gods
A curious but an unprefuming gueft
Thou might'ft partake, and carry back fome ftrain
Of divine wifdom lawful to repeat
And apt to be conceiv'd of man below.
A diff'rent tafk remains, the fecret paths
Of early genius to explore, to trace
Thofe haunts where Fancy her predeftin'd fons,
Like to the demigods of old, doth nurfe
Remote from eyes profane. Ye happy Souls!

Who now her tender diſcipline obey,
Where dwell ye? what wild river's brink at eve
Imprint your ſteps? what ſolemn groves at noon
Uſe ye to viſit, often breaking forth
In rapture 'mid your dilatory walk,
Or muſing as in ſlumber on the green?
—Would I again were with you!——O ye Dales
Of Tyne, and ye moſt ancient Woodlands! where
Oft' as the giant flood obliquely ſtrides
And his banks open and his lawns extend
Stops ſhort the pleaſed traveller to view
Preſiding o'er the ſcene ſome ruſtick tow'r
Founded by Norman or by Saxon hands;
O ye Northumbrian Shades! which overlook
The rocky pavement and the moſſy falls
Of ſolitary Wenſbeck's limpid ſtream,
How gladly I recall your well-known ſeats
Belov'd of old, and that delightful time
When all alone for many a ſummer's day
I wander'd thro' your calm receſſes, led
In ſilence by ſome pow'rful hand unſeen.
   Nor will I e'er forget you; nor ſhall e'er
The graver taſks of manhood or th' advice
Of vulgar wiſdom move me to diſclaim
Thoſe ſtudies which poſſeſs'd me in the dawn
Of life, and fix'd the colour of my mind
For ev'ry future year; whence even now
From ſleep I reſcue the clear hour of morn,

And while the world around lies overwhelm'd
In idle darkneſs am alive to thoughts
Of honourable fame, of truth divine
Or moral, and of minds to virtue won
By the ſweet magick of harmonious verſe,
The themes with now expect us. For thus far
On gen'ral habits, and on arts which grow
Spontaneous in the minds of all mankind,
Hath dwelt our argument; and how ſelf-taught,
Tho' ſeldom conſcious of their own employ,
In Nature's or in Fortune's changeful ſcene
Men learn to judge of beauty, and acquire
Thoſe forms ſet up as idols in the ſoul
For love and zealous praiſe. Yet indiſtinct
In vulgar boſoms and unnotic'd lie
Theſe pleaſing ſtores, unleſs the caſual force
Of things external prompt the heedleſs mind
To recognize her wealth. But ſome there are
Conſcious of Nature and the rule which man
O'er Nature holds; ſome who within themſelves
Retiring from the trivial ſcenes of chance
And momentary paſſion can at will
Call up theſe fair exemplars of the mind,
Review their features, ſcan the ſecret laws
Which bind them to each other, and diſplay
By forms, or ſounds, or colours, to the ſenſe
Of all the world, their latent charms diſplay;
Ev'n as in Nature's frame (if ſuch a word,
If ſuch a word, ſo bold, may from the lips

Of man proceed) as in this outward frame
Of things the Great Artificer portrays
His own immenſe idea. Various names
Theſe among mortals bear, as various ſigns
They uſe, and by peculiar organs ſpeak
To human ſenſe. There are who by the flight
Of air thro' tubes with moving ſteps diſtinct,
Or by extended chords in meaſure taught
To vibrate, can aſſemble pow'rful ſounds
Expreſſing ev'ry temper of the mind
From ev'ry cauſe, and charming all the ſoul
With paſſion void of care: others mean-time
The rugged maſs of metal, wood, or ſtone,
Patiently taming, or with eaſier hand
Deſcribing lines, and with more ample ſcope
Uniting colours, can to gen'ral ſight
Produce thoſe permanent and perfect forms,
Thoſe characters of heroes and of gods,
Which from the crude materials of the world
Their own high minds created. But the chief
Are poets, eloquent men, who dwell on earth
To clothe whate'er the ſoul admires or loves
With language and with numbers: hence to theſe
A field is open'd wide as Nature's ſphere,
Nay wider; various as the ſudden acts
Of human wit, and vaſt as the demands
Of human will, the bard nor length, nor depth,
Nor place, nor form, controls. To eyes, to ears,
To ev'ry organ of the copious mind,

He offereth all its treaſures. Him the hours,
The ſeaſons him, obey ; and changeful Time
Sees him at will keep meaſure with his flight,
At will outſtrip it. To enhance his toil
He ſummoneth from th' uttermoſt extent
Of things which God hath taught him ev'ry form
Auxiliar, ev'ry pow'r, and all beſide
Excludes imperious. His prevailing hand
Gives to corporeal eſſence life and ſenſe,
And ev'ry ſtately function of the ſoul.
The ſoul itſelf to him obſequious lies,
Like matter's paſſive heap, and as he wills
To reaſon and affection he aſſigns
Their juſt alliances, their juſt degrees ;
Whence his peculiar honours, whence the race
Of men who people his delightful world,
Men genuine and according to themſelves,
Tranſcend as far th' uncertain ſons of earth
As earth itſelf to his delightful world
The palm of ſpotleſs beauty doth reſign.

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END OF VOLUME FIRST.